THE

FAMILY OF THE SEISERS:

A Sketch of Tale

OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

Many a fiction has been ruled to be a fact under names that are genuine in our courts of law; and many a fact has been regarded as fiction in that which has been looked upon as the invention of the novelist, in which every thing is true except the proper names. There may be more moral and actual truth in a written tale, than in ninety-nine cases and reports at nisi prius.—*Confession of a Lady.*

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY J. M. ELLIOTT, 33 LIBERTY-STREET.

1844.

THE

FAMILY OF THE SEISERS.

CHAPTER I.

"——Commences at meridian."—*Log Book.*

It was a merry time, and the merriment seemed universal, with the huge iron tongues of the lofty town-clocks—situated in their airy and aristocratic homes, far above the promenade of the saints and sinners of every color and sex, who passed beneath—as they sung loudly, (and by authority, too,) that meridian had come. Their long gilded fingers, meeting together with the appearance of true friendship, pointed as directly to heaven as the spires to which they respectively aspired ever had done, and covered the figures beneath, exhibiting to the street-gazers the figures of XII.

Various echoes like these lofty iron strokes were heard to issue from the ship-yard and ship-deck bells—the liquor shelves, bread ware-rooms, barbers' shops, and counting-houses, arising out of the innumerable wooden casements of Dutch and Yankee clocks, that, with true republican independence and garrulity, made themselves heard in the same number of tones, not quite as loud, but relatively as strong, and positively with the same unerring truth.

There goes the last stroke of twelve, and it is gone for ever. And who can call it back into life?—what voice can reach where that small space of time has flown, into the regions —unknown, uncompassed by thought, unconceived by the mind—we call Eternity? The moment has gone, and, with it, the final look of how many eyes! the last pulse of how many hearts! and the closing smiles of how many that knew not life only as it is found in the gardens of childhood! The minute passed, burdened with the loud laugh and the silent tear, and the mute pains and rolling pleasures that lived upon the walks of life at the period of its transit.

The last sound had fallen, and down with it fell the sledge and the adze, the hod and the shovel, the saw and the plane; and those that throve with them were seen wending homeward for the wonted repast to satisfy the hunger that habit brings up in its sharpness, and which labor makes double-edged.

Through all the long streets and lanes men might be seen hurrying on without coats, in chip hats and tarpaulins; and many were running, to enable them to accomplish their journey, and return before the one hour allotted by custom and the cupidity of the employer would expire. There were men without shoes; and with some the feet appeared to be coated with layers of lime, while others were all tarred, and others linted with cotton, and with hands that seemed to have been buried in the froth of a molasses cask. On they went, in an eastern course, where the smoking meal of vegetables and pork, or salt beef and bakers' bread, might be seen, scarcely fit to sustain men whose labor required sustenance of a more substantial kind. How hard the poor labor! how cheaply they live! how soon they fail! and how lonely they die!

As that meridian story ceased to be rung by the thousand clocks, and as all these forms of slight-clad operatives flew by, the form of Captain John Thunderbolt was seated, with the imperfect geer of an angler, on the extreme jut of the pier at the foot of Pike-street, on the eastern section of the city. The Captain had lingered there for some time, with a reed pole in his hands and his eyes bent down upon the young flood that rolled past him with the negligence and ease of the first turn in the tide, while his lips embraced a Cubean segar of the light-brown mould. His patience in fishing, like many an idle rigger's and ship-carpenter's, was often tested severely; but even then, it seldom got exhausted, although, like too many others, patient in idleness, he exhibited some restiveness, when good sense should have urged the observance of forbearance, as a virtue of some importance. It was the delight of the Captain to sit undisturbed, take the fresh air of the river breeze, gaze upon the charging scenes of the harbor, and, with good or ill luck—either of small value to him—angle for all that might honor his bait with notice. His companion was George W. Seiser, one of the heirs-at-law of the Seisers, who frequently accompanied him; and being about ten years of age, he was enabled to entertain the Captain, and aid him in the ordinary duties of an amateur fisherman.

"You monkeys!" roared the Captain, to a

half-dozen boys, known as market-rats, who were casting stones in the river, "keep your stones close, or I'll drown you all like a litter of kittens! Wash., look out for the first fellow that sends a stone here, and I'll wash the molasses from his lips in that sunken boat."

"I don't see why," muttered the Captain, "people will bring such boys as these into the world, and send them on the public docks to get a living. I thought politicians had the sole and exclusive right to feed upon the public lunch. May I dive deep if a man ever gets a full knowledge of the world! Now, there's a half-dozen boys, the real dock fraternity, they feed on the piers and sleep in the public markets and the bye-corners of ship-yards, between oak knees and spars; chaps who actually live without doors or roof, to the delight of their anxious parents, whose sole aim is to make them worldly men."

"Why, Wash.," uttered the Captain loudly, throwing his hooks into the tide, "these amphibious fellows make a breakfast out of a molasses hogshead, emigrate to Coffee-house slip, dine at a sugar tierce, promenade along until an unlost apple can be picked up, and if tea is left out after dark, undrawn, they actually take tea on the dock. It's astonishing! If the devil have a sweet tooth, I know where he'll find victims perfectly saturated with saccharine matter. There's one, apparently ten years of age;—how early his talents have developed themselves! The pockets in his trowsers are larger than his entire hat, and he carries a pocket under the back part of his jacket, for sugar or souchong, and, when filled, it gives him the appearance of a juvenile hump-back. Precocious predilection for sweets—look at that one! his tongue is five inches in the bung of that hogshead! and there is his compeer, with his father's pantaloons—an heir-loom in the family!"

"There!" cried Washington; "a bite—a whaler—the cork's all under!"

"Pshaw!" said the Captain; "a mere junior porgy; I've hooked him, but he's a mere trifle. Wash., a man of angling knowledge can tell a bite of ten ounces or twenty in an instant; a shrimp like this fellow could not deceive me at midnight. There; cast him over, and let him grow till he is large enough for some hungry rigger or stevedore, who have an elegant taste for eels and blackfish. The latter I like to bring up, though they often look as if they demanded why they were tempted to leave their soft home, and come up here, where, Heaven knows, there are black fish enough already, who can scarcely swim in an honest way!"

"Now, Wash.," continued the Captain, "throw out there: when you have a bite, don't pull as if the fish had cast-iron gills; bring him in easy; there's an ease and grace required even in fishing for money; but the world is too eager, and don't practice with them: give a fish line, and as little pain as possible; they have feeling, and recollect they are not volunteers. There, you have him now; he's a blackfish; I know their movements; they're as spirited as a rat in a trap, and somewhat loath to come up on any terms. He's a fine half-pounder, and looks well; but they're a fish I never eat in this city."

"Why not, Captain Jack?" asked Washington.

"Why," said the Captain, after some consideration, "I never could devour dock-fish: in this ward, their diet is poor; this is the region of tar, turpentine, oil, and tallow. In the lower wards, they feed on a more befitting regimen—at least I've been informed so—and yet it cannot be at the battery circle; up here there is nothing but offal, and some nameless desserts, upon which they can now and then make a breakfast; and, to my view, it's clear that they live in a bad mess, take to drinking, and tipple on the gas from the street sluices."

"I thought they were all of a family, and fed round all the docks," observed Washington Seiser.

"True, true," observed the Captain; "they may move down for a morning or an afternoon swim, but they come up here to feed upon the burdens of the young flood; and to eat fish that patronise the refectories in these docks, I never could, and, until I observe fast-days, I never shall; if I do, I'll dive deep!"

And be drowned, p'rhaps," said Master Seiser.

"Yes," said the Captain; "or remain overboard—a thing that wouldn't be a dry joke for the two blacks yonder; they're asleep; look at them:—they earned a quarter dollar each this morning, and expended half for alcohol; the gas has put them to sleep, and I'll draw their portraits. We'll take that fellow of six feet three inches long; the sun is pouring down upon him like liquid fire; his face is overspread with drops of grease, standing sunlit and immovable, like transparent pips of small-pox; his nostrils swell out like a pair on a war-horse. What a bellows his lungs must be! His lips, thick and parted, stand out in open order: his chin, almost like varnish glistening in the sun; his shirt-collar is open, to show the neck of an ox; his curling black wool hangs in six plaits on each side. He starts; observe those two blue-bottle flies on his lips—hungry, active, and eager; the flies tickle him on the lip, burdened with beard stiff as cage-wire; the flies are off; now one returns, and insists upon dining there, in spite of his beautiful teeth! Let him: there's no accounting for taste, even in a blue-bottle fly. The latter sticks to the lips, changes position, and feels as happy as he would be on a leg of August mutton when the thermometers fly up to a hundred and nine. There,

the negro moves, the gas is in his brain, and lights up a dream. Now he blubblers like an orator in spirit; his hands move—all in vain—the fly defines his position; it is a hungry one, and he maintains his ground and the ground of his suction. I'd give a dime to know the negro's dream, distilled from vegetable distillation. He moves, and so does the fly, who is past his rich repast; the warmth of the sun overpowers the dreamer; he snores in dumb music; there's not a note in the whole emission. What an obliging patron is the sun to a dock giant! what would the sleeper give to have the heat of August all the year round? give! his lips to the bottle, undoubtedly, and his countenance to the blue-bottle flies, and a laugh at the coal companies. Look! he moves by the music of his dream; the fly changes his ground, and is taking a dessert on his nose; he pricked his feet on the beard, and got tipsey from the steam of the sleeper's breath. Now the sleeper wakes, and wishes for a coarse towel to take the grease from his hide. Phew, how he blows! and we, yes, thank heaven, we're to windward. Well, what a picture the sun makes of a spirited subject. The moon is no painter; it takes the sun to light a portrait.

The Captain laughed, as he frequently did while passing a few hours on the docks, at the singular characters that fell within his view; and now, in company with his young associate, indulged in good-humored mirth at the dark laborers, who relapsed into another slumber, although beset by the flies and gnats, which, in the exercise of their largest liberty, annoyed the sleepy recumbents—like certain animals of an equal taste with the blue-bottles, whose inclinations and endeavors to tickle the black race are not quite as harmless as the flies above noted.

While the Captain was wiping the sweat from his brow, and trying to draw a full puff from an imperfect segar, a small boat, with two men and sundry rakes, rounded the head of the pier, and lodged against the dock where the Captain and his companion were sitting.

"Here, my buck," bellowed a grum voice from the boat, "give this line a turn around the further spile, and a couple of half-hitches; take care of your line, Captin, if you kin. How are you?"

"Ah, Scrape! that you?" said the Captain; "what luck down in the bay?"

"All gone, Captin; the goolden profits of a York bay fisherman 's gone," said Tom Scrape, shaking his head with a discontented look. "I kin riccollect when I used to row old Sniper down there, and we wasn't above the run of one tide, and we was over-loaded. It's all owin' to monopoliars. I see the thing comin' long ago. Cuss me, if a man kin rake as many Yorkers as he used to clinch hundreds. It's all monopoliars; they dig up the poor creeters in seedin' time, when any senseible man in the trade 'd let 'em alone, and go and plant 'em in beds, and afore September dig out sloop loads, and sell 'em so cheap; suspicion lights on the hull trade; it's all the monopoliars. I'd like to limp some on 'em, as I told Sam., if law and all that was on our side."

"Well, vot's the use of cryin'?" said Sam Crisp, in the same guttural tone of voice; "vot's the use of barking at a dog? the monopoliars is the same in a free country as any other; ain't it so, Captin?"

"Precisely, Sam," answered the Captain, "they've only one feeling, and that's for the ungreased dollar; and if you interfere with their business, selfishness will raise 'em up like tigers, and you're ruined if you put yourself in opposition to their fair trade. I've seen 'em in both worlds, and whether they deal in granite or grub-worms, they're the same beast; and what's more, the breed never run out."

"Then they isn't like York bays," observed Tom Scrape, "for they'm run out, or nearly so. Why, I remember the time when I and Sniper used to lay on our rakes for a hull hour waitin' for the tide, which was always behind the alminic, and we'd be down to the pins with oysters, and all of 'em was cotched up the moment Sniper shot in the slip."

"Well, vot's the use of barkin'," said Sam, "all we got to do is to stick in the clam line; it's jist as good a perfession. What's the difference 'twixt a clam and an oyster, if we kin sell as many of one as t'other, without taking a four hour shin bath in the salt water? We've got cart and nag, and so don't, for heaven's sake, bark at a dog all day."

"And no danger of the nag absconding," observed the Captain, with a smile.

"None at all, Captin," said Tom, seriously, "the nags in our line, sir, never attempt to run. I don't believe a mess of goold oats would put our beast faster than a genteel walk. We always use 'em to it in the streets. I never heer'd of a clam horse running; and I've been a member of the New York Jockey Club for years. There was a horse in the porgy line, said to be of ancient blood, which attempted it, but he lost his character, and didn't bring but fourteen shillins at the horse-market. It ruined 'im. However, he was always on the spavin list."

"You mean old Sealed Eye, vot refused oats unground. Vy, the veterin doctor guv' 'im up; and the lobster men wouldn't bid for 'im, because he wasn't warranted."

"What! warrant a nag like that?" said the Captain, laughing at the notion.

"Did you ever hear the like!" said Tom; "why the old lobster-dealer was in as much earnest as if he was dying and speakin' his last will."

"And what did the Jockey Club say to that Tom?" asked the Captain.

"They voted the lobsterer crazy for axin' a warranty," said Tom; "and that's a great club, sir, that same Jockey Club; every member's a blood animal. Before he's admitted, he must know how to snort; and after, to canter; then he's put to the caracolin'; and after'ds learned to curry down, and pays a fine for refusing his oats."

"And what does all that mean?" asked the Captain, with some curiosity.

"Why the hull Club imitates the blood animals," said Tom. "How could the Club improve the breed without studyin' the habits, and imitatin' the four-footed, in all their rigs? and as for refusin' oats, that means not paying the dues. I haven't taken oats at the Club for six years, which I could done, if I'd taken the act, like the real gentlemen."

"Well, come," said Sam, "don't bark at the lovers of horse-flesh. Think the sun's an hour high, Captin?"

"Not more," said the Captain. "So, Tom, I've understood that the Alderman you put in office turned a cold shoulder after the election, as is usual with such scholars."

"Don't mention it, Captain," growled Tom, in his unhappy reminiscence. "A regular cheat is that same old harpy. He promised to put down the monopoliars; and after getting a hull shoal of the perfession to vote for 'im, he shrunk back in his shell like a muscle in December; but I've mark'd him, and we'll see by-an-by who's the sufferer."

"Why, you'll be, in course," said Sam; at least you'll grumble as much 'ither way."

"Well, if he isn't a lame duck after the election—dam'me if I think he'll have a hull skin."

"Why, the Aldermin wouldn't speak to you, even now," said Sam, laughing.

"Not he," observed the Captain; "you made a mistake, Tom, in putting confidence in a mere partizan, and forgot that such a man is most sincere before an election—perhaps because then he is most hungry."

"That's all true," observed Sam, "and he b'lieved all the Aldermin of the 29th said about putting down monopoliars and clearing the piratical clammers, who monopoliared the hull bis'ness."

"That was a sad mistake, Tom," observed the Captain;" but as he is up for re-election, you may put him out of the way yet."

"Well, we'll see; if there's any muscle in our perfession, the thing must be done, and the feller 'll find himself in a stew, without salt enough to preserve 'im."

"Well, s'pose we wait till the time comes round," cried Sam, "and then we'll see who's who, and whether the perfession 'ill act up to the thing that's right."

"They'll do it," observed the Captain; "for that Sunday movement of the oyster-loving dignitary will move a mountain upon his shoulders, which he must sink under."

"Yes, if that don't fetch 'im, he's an eel that the perfession can't spear," said Tom.

"I'll bet agin 'im," said Sam; "for things are in trainin' that 'ill move like train oil, and grease the seat of the poor Aldermin when it 's time to let 'im slip."

"Pretty good, Sam," said the Captain; "but be careful, or your party may meet with another patriot, whose teeth are as sharp, and whose appetite is co-extensive with the figure to be launched."

"We've got a canderdate already," said Tom, "and one so well known to the clammers, that he'll raise the hull mass agin the monopoliar,"

"Come, don't bark any more," observed Sam, "but shoulder the things, and let's trudge up."

The limbs of the two men were soon loaded with baskets and rakes, and the miscellaneous fragments that made up the load of the oyster-skiffs, at that time engaged in gathering out of the great highway of the bay-waters the unseemly looking fish, which, when his dirty shells are thrown aside, wins the attention and love of all in all times. And what palate ever rejected the delicate sons of the deep, whose owner had a shilling in his purse, or its extensive representative—credit?

The two men shouldered their burdens, and leaving the pier, struck eastward along the wharves, until near the point well known as Corlaer's Hook, in all the readable papers that have fallen under our inspection.

In this vicinity they lived, with many others of their own calling, which, in their humorous dialect, was dignified by the name of Perfession; and these men represented, in several points, the class among which they were frequently found. No two men on earth agreed so well together; but each had his singular traits of character and manners. Tom appeared always complaining, not of bodily health, nor the depth and lightness of his purse, nor of his daily fare, nor habiliments; but the slightest object that failed to please him, even although he had no direct personal interest in it, was mourned to an extent that bordered on the ridiculous; and so ridiculous had this singular habit appeared to his partner in the elevated art and mystery of vending oysters and clams, that the latter, ignorant and wholly uneducated, and in want of argument, and consequently of convincing persuasion, invariably endeavored to urge upon the former the coarse but not unapt recommendation—"not to bark at a dog."

The voice of Tom Scrape was loud and hoarse, almost unintelligibly so at times; and he appeared to speak in that husky guttural tone remarked in those who, in the language of half-grown idlers who encumber a grocer's corner, have "a church-yard cough," and which a thousand feet of quack candy could

not eject from the seat of its base origin. Unmarried, as was also his partner, mindless of to-morrow, its wants and supplies, except the small share of food and similar share of alcohol which he deemed necessary for a day's consumption, with a tarpaulin hat, kersey jacket, canvas trousers, and heavy water boots, Tom was an emperor for the time being, let the wind blow from any point of the compass, or failing in that, be undistinguishable. They called him Water Dog, who smiled at the shower of rain, or the stronger tempest; was at home in his boat, or up to his chin in water, gathering fish, or buffeting any current; and he was heard to say that the rheumatism might have the impudence to attack the figure head of a ship, but not him. He was so well seasoned, that in all weathers he was equal to any emergency on land and water, and where others might freeze, his blood seemed to glow.

Sam Crisp, in dress, was nearly a match for his friend, the Water Dog, originally an accidental lodger at the spot, entitled—but why? is a question—"Le Bellevue." He grew up to boyhood's strength, was apprenticed to a ship carpenter, who subsequently died and left Sam master of himself, and in possession of no art, which induced him to join Mr. Scrape in a special copartnership for the vendition of shell-fish, hard or soft, as the market and appetite of customers might require. His labor with the axe, when a boy, had developed the unsurpassed strength of the man before the passage of years gave him a legal claim to his majority, and his grasp exhibited the powerful exertion of a muscular giant, and one who, without prevarication, might be said not to know his own strength. Patient to the utmost, wholly devoid of ill temper, he never exerted his power; but all, even the characteristic brutality of the bullies in his own neighborhood, passed him by as one who might be provoked to strike, with a power they all had witnessed. It seemed to grieve him to hear complaints from any, and mostly from his partner, who, as if to tantalise the patience of his friend, seemed to have habituated himself to the practice of grumbling. Sam was uneducated, even without the rudimental exercises of a charity school, but he had a memory for facts, and the conclusions of another's judgment, without being able to recollect a particle either of argument or reason that lead to the latter. He seemed to act from the practices of others, but his mind never led him to ask why such were beneficial. The minds of men are singularly affected by the habits of others, yet among all the drunkenness that surrounded the location of this man, he never touched the deleterious liquor; and the only way to wake the savage indignation of his spirit, was to show him, it mattered not whom, any that laid a rude hand upon the defenceless, or was endeavoring to crush the unfortunate spirit of the poor. These men were frequently found past midnight bellowing with Stentorian lungs the commodities which they carried around, and which were dignified or described by a half dozen adjectives, not in fact intended as recommendatory appellatives, but as so many expletives uttered to prolong the sound of the voice, for the purpose of attracting ears within doors, and which enabled the crier to extend his drawling tones without regard to any scale of music but the fanciful. These men had not only a respect, but a very great esteem for the Captain, arising from an act of friendship when they had searched in vain for a person who had the ability to aid them in a transaction which was supposed to outrange the means of any whom they could summon to their aid. The Captain had served them in that way which made a deep impression upon their minds, and the service being rendered promptly, enhanced its value in their eyes; and whatever might be said of their associations, they appreciated kindness, and clung with willing sincerity to their friend. Gratitude has its spring in the heart, and though it may be controlled by judgment, and deemed a thing to be paid for in money by the rich, it is brighter in the poor, unable to show it except in friendly servitude, than in the more favored by fortune, and methodical, who can repay it by the current coin of the times. When once so paid, it seems to fade from the memory, and is forgotten, or lingers in the coldness of unfrequent reminiscence; but in the poor it lives for ever, because it is an uncancelled debt; and an honest heart will never deem it otherwise. There are sturdy minds in poor garbs, and some even that can withstand temptation. Sam had been subjected to a daily temptation, and if this could have been pleaded in behalf of indulgence, he would have followed the common road so many take, and been a worshipper at the low shrines where ardent spirits are administered pursuant to law. The secret of his abstinence was supposed to be an internal malady, but some knew the fact that he had been present, and saw the death of a person who expired in delirium tremens, and the effect it produced upon him, was the cause of his avoiding liquor.

"Come, my young friend," said Captain John to his companion, "let us push up towards home, or the old woman will think we're taking an eternal bath in the sea waters."

The Captain then shouldered his reed pole, and giving his basket to the boy, and receiving the hand of the latter, walked along the street that bounded the river, and followed it towards home. All dust, all dust, thought the Captain, passing amid the clouds raised by the carts that ran by, with their rumbl

plump horses, eager, perhaps, after a hard summer day's work, to scent again the oat-bag or the hay-rack. Cloud after cloud rolled along the street, filled with carts and wagons, while on the margin the day laborer and his dinner pail, and the rigger, and carpenter, and sheather, and stevedore, with a thousand others of the operative toilers, travelled towards their homes.

A few gangs of boys might be seen throwing stones and other missiles in the various docks, or playing on floating logs, or bathing from the tarred stages where the water was dark with the juices of the sewers, and the wash of the mile-long streets.

Few women could be seen in such a thoroughfare, unless when a boat from the eastward hauled in dock, and then the cabin passengers of the fresh-water craft passed from the pier, in beautiful white dresses and new-trimmed bonnets, with a huge band-box and basket and handkerchief, and several supernumerary bundles, as if the one-masted boat had come a thousand miles over the bed of salt waters, and the lady passengers had been a month and not a day in transitu.

The Captain and the small Seiser kept on the dusty path, observing the traveling public, and going along among the masses of white and sun-colored, and black and half-black, and others who originally were white, but had grown of no particular shade, but had an appearance of very doubtful hue, arising from daily occupation.

Captain John Thunderbolt—the latter being a name substituted by himself since his residence in this country—was an Englishman by birth, with not one particle of the prejudices that characterize his conceited, unreasonable, but harmless countrymen. Years had passed since his advent to the city, and his intimacy with and residence in the family of the Seisers. He had expended some time in his inquiries, when he first arrived, for the family, and when satisfied that the widow and children were found, he became an inmate of the unpretending circle, and the small mansion they occupied. The size of a house, however, and its style of decorations, and its location and unfashionable or fashionable countenance, were matters of no moment; to him comfort was the great star, fixed and for ever shining with an equal lustre, and enduring resource of light, not paling at times, and then casting a glare unwonted from its centre, but always of the same mild, unremitted showing, glimmering between the darkness of one and the transient brilliancy of another extreme; and though humble in its quiet station, yet never has the blaze of pride disturbed with its piercing fire that modest luminary in its unworshipped home on the ascending mountain of life. To be comfortable, was to him to be in possession of all the gold of the dreamer, and exactly in that situation which enabled him to laugh at the many who, leaving the middle ground, grow giddy in the unthreaded ascent, or sink in an unexplored region, and afterwards wonder why they left the pedestal where nature placed them. The Captain was a boarder and protector—a voluntary one too—which is a character that seldom makes a shadow in the home of the poor, and he possessed a heart whose feelings were of that simple class which indicates sincerity, and which impel to many a good act, without asking the sun to shine and show them. His actions spoke for themselves, won all, and kept none at a distance; and his advice was always listened to and adopted, because it had the benefit of lights, that seem to have been blended together to make that shrewd domestic philosopher, called "Experience." His recreation was smoking; and following the evil example of many millions, he eschewed the other inhabitants of the large globe, and fired the devoted Spaniards.

When seen in the genteel suit, which was always worn in excursions of business, upon the button of the blue coat might he observed a device that seemed to indicate a former attachment of his with the army—not that his bearing was equivalent to the tall stiff colonel on half pay, both of money and laurels—but he reminded one of the ex-orderly sergeant, whose retreat from the army had not bent the continual straightness of his person, nor taken the other military traits gleaned in a long course of martial drill. Where the Captain had seen service, however, was uncertain; and as he did not volunteer the history of past times, except in the way of humorous anecdote, none touched upon the subject except by the most distant inuendoes; and as they were suffered to expire unanswered, they were seldom renewed. Whether he was related to the family or not, and why he selected the poorest branch to reside with, and the humblest of the whole race, foreign or domestic; why his limited purse at certain times of need was made an auxiliary to their small exchequer, which at times enabled the family to distinguish between the well-known states generally termed "comfortable" and "indigent," with many other and similar questions, were often debated by the females of that family circle, and many calculations were made and worded through hours of confidential intercourse; but not all the well-known ingenuity of female debates, nor the perforating and penetrating arguments of the sharp talkers and pointed thinkers, composing the debating circle of which each was an equal segment, discovered any thing more than had been brought to light long before by the same assembled wisdom, and been forgotten. All these curious, confidential and home debates might have been avoided by the scrutinizers

had they known, that a man without any interested motive, but with a good heart, and wholly wanting in unnecessary pride, could attach himself to others, whether poor or otherwise, and manifest a pure feeling, and aid in the many small matters that make up the whole happiness of the needy, and endeavor to sustain the slight props that hold up the small prospects of the unfortunate, as easy as, and with more satisfaction to the receiver, than a rich man, who, with an interested motive and a heart not quite of tested soundness, and with all the pride that makes him appear ridiculous, visits his poor relatives the moment the slightest hint reaches his mind that his patronage is a thing of value, and his friendship has a price, and his charity may be given for value received, or to be received.

Such was the Captain—and there are many like him in the broad circle of earth—and they are the only missionaries who move without a name, and never spend the money of other people, nor exhibit to the world any of the special acts that transpire in the pervading shadows that always shield from a stranger's eye the fingers of true charity, when busy with the unseen evils of the heart. There are many such—the true domestic missionaries—whose names never get lettered in a newspaper or magazine; are never heard in the loud reports of singular men; are never whispered in ten thousand branch conventions, formed for talking long and praising each other wonderfully. No! but all in secret and in shade remain the names of the doers, not the talkers, of good—whose bosoms contain the same quiet feeling as that which was covered by the summer jacket of the Captain; who, with his small companion, reached the leasehold premises of an old occupier thereof.

CHAPTER II.

An old couple—the occupier and occupied—and matters that clung to both.

The residence of Mrs. Billington Seiser, into which the Captain and her eldest son entered, was situated in Cherry street, on the eastern portion of the island, and was supposed to be number 1699, from the fact that those figures appeared upon a rusty plate stuck against the front, to mark the assured state of the premises, by some company who bet that fire would not destroy the boards and timber for a given length of time. Unlike the huge wooden and brazen brick buildings of that singular vicinage, the mansion of the widow did not obtrude its little front on the street, but with all the coyness of a shrunken leasehold tenement of only one story and a half high, its yellow painted small front was seen about twenty feet back from the street line. A small grass-plot occupied the space between the house and street-side, where a picket fence was seen as white as lime could render it, and ornamented with a small gate, which was closed by the heavy aid of an old cannon ball that had done good service in all weathers, in its capacity of gate-closer, during a series of years. The house had ample room for the tenants, and a spare corner in the attic for the Water Dog and his friend Sam, who crept up to their berths whenever they elected to do so, to snore away the balance of a night; and especially if, on the succeeding morning, they were to be engaged to carry down to the market the stock of the old lady, commonly denominated "truck." There was a small door, and one window, that led to the first floor, and an apology for a window above these, to ensure a free current of air to whomsoever respired in the lofty chambers; and these were the only ornaments in front, except at the periodical times known in every ancient family as "washing-days;" and just after such peculiar days, on and over the little grass-plot, certain lines might be seen run at right and wrong angles, and loaded with cotton and woolen of all the shapes, and sizes, and colors that could be found in the charge-book of the most able and industrious laundress. It was a curiosity to look at the loaded lines which the indwellers exhibited to the footpads who went by whistling, and casting an envious ogle at the clean cotton, and to the neighboring ladies, whose keen eyes searched for holes, and darns, and patches in the several pieces, in order that they might contrast the same with the details of their own wash-tub, and whisper the result, if in their favor, to a dozen acquaintances—confidentially, of course. But more curious was it to look upon the congregation that swung on the lines, when the murmurs of the high winds could be heard upon the grass-plot, in changing tones, high and low; and when the fingers of that same unruly set of winds shook and twisted, and threatened to tear in pieces the woolen and cotton things that sometimes got distended enormously, as if a party of quarreling airs had taken possession of a petticoat, and kept it inflated purposely to accommodate themselves.—and having ended the quarrel there, away they appeared to twist until meeting a neighboring shirt, or old skirt, the turmoil would commence again, and these latter wet articles would swell up as if the same windy antagonists intended to carry on the war even in damp garments, and sing their songs of triumph. The little lot of earth upon which the small house reposed, in unfashionable style, was not of the gran-

diloquent dimensions so well known to surveyors by the description, "twenty-five feet front and rear and one hundred deep"—it was scarcely two-thirds of such size, and of a shape that never was ascertained by the crooked calculations of a school-master. But it was a small piece of terra firma, and deemed sufficient for a dweller in leasehold premises, with a barley-corn per annum rent, if demanded, and two renewals, and taxes and assessments to be paid by the lessee, which, in modern times, amounts to double the value of the lot during the first term—and how much thereafter, is a question that must be left for subsequent knavery to make known.

Mrs. Billington Seiser, the sole lessee of these modest premises, was one of the dignified female negociators or saleswomen, known as a hucksteress to the curious proculators, male and female of families, genteel and sailor boarding houses, and the lively little women who cater for houses, where "Pension Française" appears on a tin sign—and one who dealt honestly, and with all the characteristics that adorn the bustling business of a fair trader, and one who never was accused, even by the slippery tongue of a greasy butcher-boy, of sliding off a tin sixpence for a silver one, a German silver shilling for one of Spanish birth, and breeding, and metal; nor a pewter quarter-dollar for one of legal and unmixed contents, upon whose face appeared an eagle and a dozen stars, to indicate that it was a coin born in heaven, and sent down for us experimental republicans—when we could get it. Her store, or, in mother English, her "shop," where flowers blushed in vain, because out-colored by the neighboring cuts of blood-red meat, and where the vast and various crowds of esculents reposed in baskets and barrels, was located in the old piles of buildings named Catharine Market, long known to the juvenile fruit-larceners and adult peculators, and all the inhabitants of the river section of the city, for a dirty street on the west side, lined with the blue carts of the stall-owners, and the horses attached thereto; and for another dirty street on the east side, lined with the female traders, of whom Mrs. Seizer had the high honor of being one; and the little market was known, too, for giving shelter to some very heavy men, who seemed to have fed upon their own tender-loins, to get so plump and large; and then, again, to some very small, thin bodies, who appeared to have consumed all their own spare-ribs, which resulted in leaving them spare indeed. And in connection with these characters, there were plump and jolly butcher-boys, scrapers of stalls, and meat-tray bearers, and powerful journeymen, who all whistled the fancy tunes of the spot, and cut up meat, when the first twilight streaks appeared on the margin of the eastern horizon, with rosy cheeks, brick-colored hands, clean white aprons, and sur sleeves, sharp knives, keen cleavers, and politeness seldom expected from the rough managers of oxen.

Everything saleable, with many things unsaleable, from the enormous and ancient animal and vegetable kingdoms, might be seen in and around this old market, from the cultivated meadows, the hot-houses, and the gardens of Nassau Island; from beds under the water, and beds above it; from fields of air and of earth; from pens of the tame and wild, and from coops of the living and caufs of the dead, and from every source, all addressing themselves, in mute exhibition, to win from the agent of the hungered, or the hungered masses themselves, a price or value in money—that potent god, whose power could sweep the market, and all its contents, living or dead. In the phraseology of the extremely sympathetic of our day, it is a "hard life" and business, that same life and business of a hucksteress—there she is when the soft snow tumbles down upon her to whiten things that nature had made blue and red, when the hail-stones plump themselves upon the potatoe fiercely, and often break themselves into pieces upon the frozen nose of a stiff turnip—there she is, in rain, and mist, and sudden shower, and halting tempest, in the middle of a deep winter, and the depth of a mid-summer, from the first paling of the retreating stars of the morning until customers are gone, and the great and powerful clerk of the long markets rings his authoritative bell, and warns the good people and bad to close up the outspread merchandise, and shut their out-door shops. Yes, there sits the amiable trader of the varied "truck," perhaps with a pair of spectacles, of the most recent patent, and looks at the unsold contents of baskets, and half barrels, and tubs, and pots—and wonders when that quart of cranberries will go, when that measure of lettuce will pass off; if, before another quart of water is thrown in its face to freshen its countenance—when that bunch of turnips, threatening to wilt before the morrow, will find a customer—when that peck of blue-nose potatoes will be chosen for value received—when that bunch of beets, as red as the rose on the living cheek of a happy girl, will go, will they find a lover—the beets, not the rose and girl—will they go? and then down sinks the head of the hucksteress; and she nods that head, and nods again, almost asleep, as if she were saluting another head directly opposite—a large head of cabbage. But, hist! there comes a busy-body; see how she looks, with her small change crowded in a small purse, and both grasped in her hard hands. She treads lightly, with a very small foot, which carries a very neat figure and bouncing little body—it's Miss Bluerib. She prices and

feels everything—pinches the potatoes, bores the beets, squeezes the turnips, turns over the cabbages, and turns up her little nose, and turns off with a frown—and buys nothing. How unbecoming in Miss Bluerib, a serving girl—not woman, no—she is not much over thirty years, and could not suffer herself to be called woman—it would make her appear too far advanced in the age of discontent. Here comes Mr. Pluckpear; he prices and cheapens every article; he shakes his head, and bites a pie-apple, and then frowns upon the little slipshod girl, who carries the basket behind him. He says the potatoes he purchased before were unsound and false-hearted, a defect that struck to the very centre of their value; the turnips were wilted; his child was nearly choked with them, and they were humanely passed down to the servants in the kitchen for consumption; the beets he bought were never beat for toughness in resisting water at the boiling point. "What a world we live in," said Mr. Pluckpear, biting another apple—and with him one bite was the whole apple—and then he moved off as indifferent and surly as if he were imposed upon every minute in life, because he once bought a wilted turnip. Then comes Mrs. Chink, a bonny little woman, who commences smiling a quarter of a mile off, and meets one with a burst of outbreaking feeling. She prices, and smiles, and cheapens, and smiles again. What a singular lady is Mrs. Chink—she will not be unhappy nor displeased, say what you will—even tell her there is but one bunch of beets left, and she is sure to take them, because surly creatures will not take the last of anything, and some are so stubborn they would even decline to take the last blessing left on earth, because it *was* the last. Now she chats and talks rapidly, and does not condemn a single thing; she buys, and pays for a full basket, and then smiles—not accidentally nor coldly, sometimes called formally—no, her's is a sweet nature, and peace is always at home in her womanly heart; and the latter is fresh with kind feeling, nurtured for the benefit of her kind. She leaves the market with a smile and a nod. "I do believe," thought the widow, "there's no generous feeling in the world, except what women have. Bless the poor of the world—what would they do, if there was no women like that dear Mrs. Chink? It warms a body to see Mrs. Chink come in the market"—and then the hucksteress casts her eyes around, and ruminates upon surrounding matters, and thinks of the small profits of the trade, and the hazards of that line of business, dealing in articles in their nature perishable, and which sometimes lose their virtue and value in the hands of their owner, and are cast off to entice the enduring appetite of a gentlemanly porker, who swallows the dead loss for the benefit of whomsoever it may concern. It is, in sooth, a hard life, or more properly, one of the rough roads of that same life which honest labor travels, enduring privations not seen upon the tessalated walk, the velvet roads, and gilded stages where the rich tread, whose riches beget indulgence, and indulgence—happiness?

Mrs. Seiser was sitting in her room, in company with Benny, her youngest son, and madam La Pump, a neighbor. The room was one that invariably among the poor comprises the three characters, known as "parlor," "sitting-room" and "kitchen." Its furniture was all of domestic manufacture, made for use, not for show. A rag carpet, which, in its pristine age and state, blended every color in the rainbow, or any other bow, had been a curiosity, not only to look at as a combiner of colors, but as an article to which almost every household article that could be joined together had contributed. It had white lines and yellow and blue lengths, and brown streaks and lilac courses, and slate-colored fragments, all representing a meeting of wardrobes cut into slits, and taken from the persons of some unfortunate political partizans, who had lost office, and were compelled to pawn even their ———!! Well—there was a piece of jacket sewed to a slit from a petticoat, and a fragment of a blue coat to a piece of a lady's frock, and a bit from an old greasy jacket tacked to a rag from a spencer, and a yard of hose cemented, as it were, to a snake-like piece of changeable silk gown, and a half yard of red flannel attached to a foot of soiled night-cap, and a string from a theatrical princess' interior coat stitched in undying closeness to a piece of canvas trousers of the odor of tar and turpentine, and lengths of rope-yarn clenched to linsey-woolsey—making dark and light, and black and shaded, besides developing the washed and unwashed, dyed and scoured, patched and unripped, faded and chintz color male attire, and female wrappers, infant's small uniforms and the Russian robes of some to whom the lullaby had been sung until sleep halted by and stopped the music. A few yellow chairs, whose bottoms had been worn smooth and concave; a cherry stained table, with leaves that fell down at the touch of the table clearer; a large cooking stove in front of the mantel-piece—the latter ornamented with a couple of candlesticks, with copper bodies and silver skins—with sundry minor auxiliaries, together with clean snowy window curtains, formed the native features of the furnished room. These were all that necessity called for, and consequently all that comfort demanded. The latter is, after all, the most modest friend a body has in this wide world, so competent is it to make the heart feel at home on a floor of straw or a covering of rag carpet, with a

half or quartern loaf, a mug of ale—or even water—with the most common gifts, which are those God afforded to us, until man improved upon the system of life, and then contentment was outshone by pride—and remains in the shade. The old lady felt no want of other furniture, although her whole store was worthless, in the estimation of those who keep a room of costly ware to satisfy the eye of pride, which fixes its gaze upon every thing in the circle of brilliancy, and clings to it like a moral moth.

"Well! here we are," said the Captain, entering, "with the common luck of fishermen, nothing to boast of but a good appetite, although we have some scaly prizes to make a fry for those who love the dock-fish—ah, Madam La Pump, pardonnez! I didn't observe you—how is your health and the health of your snow-ball, Madam."

"Nappo," said the French lady addressed, "he is well, tankee, Capetan, and I wish he always so."

"Next to my respect for you," observed the Captain, with a serious face, "comes my respect for your snow-ball; what an eye he has, like a charcoal bullet—may I dive deep if he falls over board in my company."

This allusion was made to the lap-dog of the French lady, partly covered over by a shawl of a dozen colors and immense variety of figures. The dog was her friend, and pet companion, and eternal source of solicitude, and to him were frequently directed the brief but continuous soliloquies of a sharp temper, when any disappointment or depression of spirits made it necessary for her to tell her griefs, real or fanciful, to something, any thing that had life, until her reviving good nature stopped the stream of words, and she was enabled without deceit to smile; and then such was the fury of her excessive fondness, that the little pug would bark a grumbling disclaimer against the smothering embraces of his mistress. Madam La Pump was a widow of some —— years of age—never did a mortal know the exact number, and all our researches have been in vain to find that golden number, except that at one time a comparison of dates and things seemed to fix it at fifty, and failing to get a second Gallic or anglo Gallic defender; after repeated and politic attacks upon the ranks of the opposite sex, she adopted the lap-dog, named Napoleon, into her solitary apartment, to pour out upon his small head her lessons, troubles, affections and afflictions, remote or recent, on all subjects and of all kinds that rose in the mind of a bereaved, but not broken-hearted lady. She was an artist in the varied, and delicate, and beautiful field of artificial flowers, industrious and talented, whose sheer industry during the long march of the summer sun, and the short roll of the evening hours, gave the sweet result, unknown to many, which is termed, in the prayer of ancient time, "daily bread." Only to the small pet and pug, however, did the little lady exhibit the petulance of imboiling temper, and within her own doors—and therein she evinced more discretion than some of her own sex. Bad temper is bad enough in all conscience, even without listeners, but when scattered among the recipients of a neighborhood, it seems like multiplying the domestic horrors and dissipating them gratis.

She was a happy little French lady, as the Captain observed—with friendship for everybody on two legs, and love for a solitary dog, on four legs. She was a true friend of the Seisers; at all times a privileged neighbor, who runs in for a moment, an hour, or an evening, to chat or work, or both, and to vary the monotony of a sedentary life.

Often, in her own room, would she sit for a whole hour, and pour out an hundred questions to her little dog, and feign to chastise him with an open hand, for not answering, while the unconscious innocent, as quiet as a fly in winter quarters, and sound asleep, had not the slightest knowledge of the intent, real or mimic, of his garrulous mistress. The Captain had often flattered the little Madam and her smaller pet, in a way peculiarly his own; and the unsuspecting neighbor, with much simplicity, was led to believe that the Captain was the only one who really did estimate womankind, in all stages of life; and she actually whispered to one of the Seisers that the Captain was, in her estimation, second only to Napoleon the Grand, after whom her Nappo was christened.

Life is happier with an object that takes from the mind and the affections their superfluous burden; and when the creeping pet is not to be seen in the household, such an one as the little dog is often cherished; certainly he conversed as little as any of the small pets housed in the mama's lap, but in some points of view he was preferable.

Only think how innocent the little fellow lay—sometimes with an eager appetite for stewed beef, and often growling in a low tone for a slice of tender-loin. There was no danger of little Nappo kicking, like other little favorites with two legs, who tear a new dress, or drag down the ribband from a cap, or scratch the white arm of his little sister. If put in the lap of a visitor, there was no danger, like the father's pet "on the knee," of its pulling out the watch-guard, fingering the lower lip, or soiling the snowy collar laid over the cravat like a school-boy's. And if a large visitor dropped in, with big cheeks and pimpled nose, the little pug did not, like the little darling of his mother, finger the huge carbuncles on the ornamented face, to the startling horror of the grinning visitor, and

the astonishment of the frightened mama, who took the infant before it had time to tap the pimpled nose, and draw out a dark drop of blood—or brandy.

In all these points of view, the little pug was preferable; and it may be a rule among the ladies who train and maintain the little quadrupeds, that there is less danger in nursing an article so harmless, than the excessively mischievous children who pounce upon the carpet, and prick their hands with pins and needles, and eat small pieces of shirting cloth and linen, and try to swallow a spool of number twenty of cotton thread, and chew small pieces of calico so cunningly that mama has to laugh, the nurse has to smile, and little Amanda has to giggle, and even Tommy Cornelius has to cry out, "Oh, mudder, only tee little Tommy twollerin' your pin, and chokin' he telf."

"Oh, Capetan Tonnebo," said the French lady, in answer to the Captain, "I will nevair trus' Nappo on de watair."

"That's right, Madam," said the Captain, "don't make a fisherman of 'im, for if he gets wet the salt water 'ill ruin the color of his coat; and as I understand the thing, a lap-dog's wool makes the whole value of the creature."

"Oh no, Capetan," said Madam, "he's de playful disposition, de bon homme—companion gentle."

"What do you say, Mrs. Sesier—am I right—isn't the thing reasonable?" asked the Captain.

"Well, it's reasonable," said Mrs. Seiser; "fine feathers make fine birds, and why shouldn't fine wool make fine lap-dogs?—Why, Madam Pump's greens wouldn't sell in the market, with me, if they wasn't green, and a blue-nosed potatoe must be bluish—you may depend, it's true."

The truth is, Mrs. Seiser always agreed with the Captain; it saved her much trouble, for thinking is a heavy labor for some people who never read, and the female sex who read much lose the natural turn for narrative, which is the reason some one stated why they are so taciturn. The Captain was generally right, and Mrs. Seiser often elaborated his hints, and they divided the text and context pretty equally. If he had the labor of thought, she had the delight of utterance.

"Oh, vairy true," said Madam, "but Nappo is more company den wool and fedders—he is playful, and he is much comfort."

"Well, heaven forbid that even a dog should be robbed of the sympathy and kindness he may rightfully claim in this world," said the Captain, "or that you shouldn't think I like him as a snow-ball who is of some service; however, if he gets into the salt water, he'll spoil his jacket. Now, Mrs. Seiser, suppose we have supper, and then I shall burn a couple of browns, according to custom."

"Here, Wash., clean your fish, and put some salt on 'em, and they'll be a relish for breakfast. When I was of your age, I could cook a fish equal to a French cuisine."

"Oh, Capetan," said Madam La Pump, "the French artist is de grand maitre of cuisine."

"You're right, Madam La Pump," said the Captain; "the French cooks are the greatest disguisers of animal food of any age or any world; I've heard from good authority, that they once offered dog's meat to the King, and called it the tender-loin of English rabbit, disguised in a dozen potions of seasoning; and that the French King was so delighted with the dish, that he frequently called for the same. That at another time, they gave him sausages cooked in nine different modes, that is, by cooking nine different kinds of meat of as many kinds of animals, minced in the manner of sausages, and that the Royal Maitre was in extacies an half hour after, by finding the skin of his tongue pealing off, owing to the fact that the different kinds of minced-meat had been smothered in an overwhelming compound of spices and peppers, done with a view to obliterate the taste of the original flesh; and that the joy of the King arose from the circumstance of his having to sit four hours bathing his tongue in champagne wine, in order to cool that busy member of the royal mouth, which always wags with pleasure, and at the expense of the common subject."

The laugh excited by this deliberate statement of the Captain, made with the severe countenance of a deacon, and in which Madam La Pump joined, deeming the relation a high eulogium on the character of the French culinary artist, had nearly subsided, when the lap-dog shrieked, in his own peculiar manner, most outrageously.

The cause of this unceremonious outbreak on the part of the white dog was ascertained. It appeared that the youngest Seiser had unconsciously poured some of the hot water of the tea-pot upon the little pug's legs. In the first place, Madam La Pump's heart seemed to be breaking, and she shrieked, as in duty bound, and turned pale on the instant—a thing not very difficult—and then hugged the little dog, and kissed him on the top of his sconce, and squeezed his wet leg with a masonic grip. In the next place, the small Seiser was reprimanded for his carelessness, and sent into the corner to pout for the balance of his supper. In the third place, Mrs. Seiser suggested that, as the wool on the dog's leg was thick, the water would lose much of its heat before it reached the flesh, and consequently, that the burn would be trifling. In the fourth place, the elder boy was laughing

immoderately, with his face in an empty bowl, glad that the French lady's pet was lamed, perhaps, as that would keep a dog from the tea-table of a Christian family; and in the last place, the Captain suggested, with a countenance of deep seriousness, the application of a plaster invented by Dr. Glassblower, which was warranted to draw heat out of the human frame so rapidly, that in eight minutes and a half life would become extinct, and every particle of animal heat eradicated; or the application of a fluid discovered by Surgeon Cornwinder, one drop of which, irradiated over a space of twelve inches square, healed the part affected, ejected unnecessary heat, and induced a growth of hair of a deep indigo-blue, as soft as silk-velvet—and all in twelve hours, or the money returned to the buyer, with the thanks of the inventor, who was an M. D., for patronage bestowed upon the fine arts, and the secret sciences.

"There," said the Captain, in conclusion, "a beauty-spot for life on the hind leg, as soft as silk and as blue as indigo."

Mrs. Seiser had ceased laughing, as well as her eldest boy; her youngest had smoothed down the erection of his pouting lip; Madam had done grieving, and the Captain was puffing in earnest his Cubean; and the dog, rolled in a quadruple woolen covering, was silent per force—for no dog could be heard to breathe from the smothering bandages that now environed him—when a knock at the door was heard, and the same being opened, the sun-burned features, huge black whiskers, reaching from ear to ear, and thick uncombed hair, with the calm, patient-looking face of Samuel Crisp, was thrust in.

"Good even', all," said Crisp, standing erect, for bowing was not within the circle of his observances; "and, Captin, I thought I'd drop round and see if you'd want us for the mornin', and what time."

"Yes," said Mrs. Seiser, "come down, Sam, before sun-rise; and whether I'm here or not, you'll see what to bring—all them that's marked."

"Sit down, Sam," said the Captain, "sit down, my buck, there's labor in standing as well as walking—so you caught nothing in the bay."

"Only a trifle, Sir," said Sam; "the chances on the bay is gone, sure enough, as Tom says; well, it's no use to bark at a dog, we'll keep on clammin'. We go, to-morrow, over to the yard on buserness. P'raps, Captin, you'll be on the pier to-morrow, and when we go to the meetin' you'd like to go; we'll be in full force, clam, oyster, fish, crab and lobster; we're to have a cheerman, two wice-cheermen, and two sec'taries, all out of the perfession, from ev'ry market cellar and stand in the city. If we don't skull that Aldermin out of the tide, I'll drown myself in six inches of water, and give my share of life to Madam Pump's dog. How is Nappo, Mrs. Pump?"

"Ah! Monsieur Crip, he is burn wid hot watair," said the French lady; "not much injure."

"Why, did he git obstroperlus for supper, and plunge in the kittle for a soaked biscuit?" asked Mr. Crisp.

"Only accident, Sam," said Mrs. Seiser. "Little Ben unluckily spilled hot water on poor Nap.; but it's very slight, and he'll soon be over it; for Madam Pump's as good as a doctor."

"It's my b'lief, mam," said Sam, "that a dog 'ill cure 'imself of any dersease what's outside; it's the natur' of the animal. Why, Captin, I had a black dog that broke his leg, and I b'lieve he sot it 'imself, and healed up the wound; he got well, and never had a limp afterwards; he swum like a Newf'unlander. I guv 'im to Jack Rigger, when he went out in the crazy brig. The poor dog never had but one fault, or I wouldn't guv 'im away."

"And what was his fault? as they say of horses," asked the Captain.

"Robbery," said Sam; "he'd steal out of the market at night, and lug home a leg of lamb. They followed him once, s'posing that he was sent; but they couldn't git at his owner; for when ev'ry body knew he was a thief, even Lawyer Jim wouldn't own 'im."

"'T was best to ship him," observed the Captain; "he was too fond of animal food."

"Yes, that was his on'y fault; but the Lor' knows that's bad enuf. Well, I b'lieve I'm off. We'll be down, mam, before the yard gun's off. Captain, will you be on the pier to-morrow?"

"Yes, in the afternoon, Sam," answered the Captain.

"Well, we'll be crossin' from the yard about that time. Well, I'm off; good night, all," said Sam, passing out.

The door did not close after the rough Mister Crisp, until it had admitted the agile form of Miss Angelica Seiser, the sister of Mrs. Seiser, who entered with that light, delicate step, remarkable in ladies of genteel form, and very small feet.

"And, bless us and save us!" said Angelica, "you'll suffocate the snow-ball, my dear Pump."

"He is burn," said Madam.

"Fell in the tea-kittle?" suggested Angelica.

"Not so bad for all the company," said the Captain, "or we'd have had tea as great as Napoleon."

"Well, and what is the matter, that you keep the blossom rolled in blankets?" asked Angelica.

"He is better so, my dear," observed Madam.

"It's a small hurt, and he'll soon be over it," said Mrs. Seiser.

"Quite small," said the Captain; "only one leg drawn up by hot water."

"And who done it?" said Angelica.

"Ben," said Mrs. Seiser.

"Jist like Benny," returned Angelica.

Little Ben, finding his aunt with a frown, and not with her usual present of lemon candy, laid down on the rag carpet, and indulged in base notes, resembling the violent inhalation of atmospheric gas, through the nasal apertures.

Miss Angelica Seiser, called by the Captain "Angel," partly by way of compliment, and partly from a habit of abbreviating names, was a single lady, not quite of the age of Madam Chinchilles Twittez La Pump, and one who had never tasted of connubial sweets or matrimonial acids—if such there be, as some evil-whispering persons have declared upon their own experience. She was under the common size, with a fair face, where the rose was never red, but always white, and this whiteness was of long duration, and perhaps owed its perennial appearance more to the gifts of science than the unpurchased aid of nature. Indeed, the native land of Madam La Pump can supply the earth, and all the votaries of the toilet thereupon, at a very small outlay, with any article that good taste, or the want of it, can demand, to change, preserve, or darken or lighten the complexion, and render age juvenile by candle-light; and, in fact, cast back the semi-centenarian countenance into the first quarter of life's summer moon. Her hair was fixed, and laid smooth in shining sections, or tortured into ringlets and long sinuosities, as the combined taste of Madam and the Angel seemed to settle as most in the little line of fashion studied by them.

There was a peculiarity in the small mouth of Miss Angelica, that might be esteemed a dental phenomenon. She had but one solitary tooth in front, a single beauty, white as the unlodged snow, unequalled in enamel, hidden from every eye, for none could ever see it—there it stood, in health and strength, but powerless for want of a competitor to meet it in duty, a perfect one, and like its owner—alone.

The loss of the beautiful neighbors of the single tooth of Miss Angelica had done no injury, except in that cardinal point of view—appearance; and also in rendering it wholly out of her power to use the letter V., which was slipped aside, or rather covered over by its next friend in the alphabetical series.

There are gifts of a higher order, and more essential for the happiness of human life, than mere personal beauty; and this lady had them. A flow of good humor, never checked by misfortune; an industrious habit of working, which always ejected those unseemly creatures called blue-devils; and feelings that always lead to a charitable action, were her's in a greater degree than generally evince themselves in the sex. There was another gift, which we consider a valuable one, but many disagree with us, with some knowledge derived from home—we mean the gift of talking. Miss Seiser could not be exceeded by an array of opponents, no matter how well soever they were drilled in a scientific or social manner, in the field or the house; and this fine trait in her character made her entertaining in the home of the Seisers, or in the room of Madam La Pump.

The Captain always forgave any little extravagance in the conversational exercises, even when three or four pupils appeared all at one time to challenge the ear with Babel-like rehearsals, because of the plain simplicity of the social coterie of entertainers to whom he listened, and the kindliness of their exceeding good nature.

Miss Seiser was a semstress, who worked hard for a very little compensation; and she was glad to change the scene of home for the widow's small house, where she was sure of meeting some one as social as herself, and where whatever of fresh intelligence was known, might be gleaned and commented upon, until succeeded by a larger or more recent wonder to be canvassed by no fixed rules, as no moderator ever checked the ambitious and fleetest debater.

CHAPTER III.

A bird's-eye view of the market—its pies, coffee, dough-nuts, &c.—The Water Dog in a a storm, and an angel's quarrel.

To the eye of an early observer, standing on the long pier at the point called Corlaer's Hook, the morning succeeding the evening alluded to in the last Chapter, might be seen, slowly coming from the eastern point of the earth, and in that state commonly called gray, which is unseen by the loiterers on a late couch. Indeed, every thing had a misty appearance on, and around, and over the rolling waters and their bubbling and twisting tides; and the distant land seemed shrouded by a body of vapor, and the boats and larger class of shipping were nearly invisible, except the huge black hulks at the navy-yard, that reposed in the quietness of dark giants disabled and powerless, and which had the honor of being the property of a few millions of owners, who were free and independent—in a political sense.

The deep bay of the Wallabout, its sheet of calm water, and sandy shore, and green patches of earth, and gardens of fruit, and

flowers, and work-shops, and mansions, and towering trees, and chimneys, and dark armaments, and warlike masses of forms, were hidden from view by the veil that hovered in laziness, wanting a slight breath from the free wind to raise it on wings like the morning's birds that sailed in their leisure, and looked for the coming of the olden sun.

All was quiet, and without the echoes that startle not in day's endurance; no hammers, nor saws, nor chisels, nor cumbrous cart-wheel, or rapid and deafening chinks of the boiler-makers, were heard—all seemed still and asleep, except when the fall of an oar or block was heard on the deck of some Connecticut sloop rounding the point, with a mainsail large enough to make blankets for the sea-gods, and all their sons in the shallows, and daughters in the deep—or the sharp cry of the eager gull which dove in vain for some shooting fish that cut through the misty wave, determined not to be made a gull of. The sun had not thrown his lines of light over the extensive and lithographic town of Williamsburgh, that lay in the depth of its matin slumbers, without the presence of a dreaming Alderman, and rising from the deep river, with its green face, and white houses, and flowery gardens, and acres of vegetables.

From the openings between large timbers, from worn-out boilers, nooks in ship-yards, and box-carts, might be seen the forms of independent loafers, with duck pantaloons, muslin shirts of the yellow hue, and shapeless chip hats, stretching their rested limbs, scratching in various places indicated by a living cause, and expectorating, in the polished language of their own schools "chips of froth," and then wending their way to some hole where the brute had a license to poison his fellow by the homopathic dose, and dealing legally in a traffic by which more victims are sent reeling to the shades below, than can fairly or unfairly be laid to the charge of the innumerable gentlemen who glorify in the couple of letters called M. D..

At that early, misty hour, before the small shoot of flame had glanced, and the curl of bounding smoke had passed from the navy-yard gun, the forms of old Mrs. Seiser, and of Tom Scrape, and Samuel Crisp, were seen moving along the side-paths of Cherry street, loaded with the negotiable variety that make up, in part, the aggregate which appertains to the stock and stand of a hucksteress.

Few were out so early—the sweetness of the morning air has fewer lovers than any other sweet things in existence, and a less number of voluntary wooers. Now and then Crisp would give a horrid wink to a servant woman washing her iron-bound green pail under a pump, or a broad stare to some dark daughter of distant Africa, shoeless, and hatless, and shawlless, whose tumbled mop of disordered hair had not been reflected in a looking-glass since the preceding Sunday, because that day was the only one devoted to reflection.

There were numbers of riggers, and carpenters, and laborers, with kettles and tools, pushing on to the theatre of their daily operations, and men with jackets on their arms, and segars in full puff, who rolled on as fast as the carters mounted on their heavy vehicles, and making a rattling sound on the circular stones of the street.

The party reached the grand piles of Catharine Market for the display of eatables, as the boy of the slop-shop was stretching his limbs, and looking up at the casement of his windows, and wishing every slat that covered the glazed sash was already in its daily deposit; and then the grocer's boy adventured from the dark grog-hole, to take a peep of coming morn; and slipshod women, and black sailors half clad, and white market-tenders who do odd jobs, and are jobbers for small rewards, passed along, and halted and talked, many unwashed, unshaven, and unshod, and with appetites unsatisfied.

The out-door shop of the hucksteress, which at night presents the appearance of a small hill, completely covered by an old canvas awning, is an unseemly thing to look at; but when the morning's dawn brings the gentle spirit that presides all day in the fruitful temple, that same unsightly heap is soon transformed into a section of edibles, where all looks in full bloom and ripeness, and as fresh as if plucked, or pulled, or cut an hour previous—which plainly manifests that it does take a lady to make ugly things look fair, stale things look new, and old things look young; and may the gift cling to them with the gentle spirit of which they are the immemorial owners! There were ranges of baskets, and every basket had an esculent of different color, whose faces had been freshened with a dash of delightful water, and every dissimilar shape, was to be seen; and some were large, some small, and some crooked; and all that were mis-shapen were not cast away, nor deemed unsaleable, because nature forms, and fashions, and moulds as she chooses such children of the green beds and brown fields—and who is to gainsay what that ancient and prolific old lady does in her own home of showers and sunshine, and rainbow-colored robes? and who can take her to task, because some of her progeny are "cabbage" heads, and because some have blue noses, and pink eyes, and long tails, and others distorted features and rotund bodies? How would it do for a very rich man to shake his powdered head, because a potato happened to be crooked, or a turnip too flat, or a parsnip with too long a tail, or a carrot too bulky on his head-piece, when, if the truth were known, perhaps

that rich man had a wig on his head, a false calf in his boot, and a clay grinder in his mouth; and he might be smaller than humbler sinners in the common communion of men. And would it answer at all for a pretty woman to turn aside, because a flower was not as lovely as the one in her own face, and the eye of a kidney potato had not the same expression as her own? no! it would be an insult to the oldest lady in the world, whose progeny are loved by all, and are nursed and reared, and even devoured by bachelors, who are fond of no other children but dame nature's! No, nobody ever heard of such refinement upon market criticism—it would ruin one half of the venders retail and gardeners wholesale, and their families, in both ways.

All the heavy labor, such as lifting boxes and barrels, and obtaining a small cistern of water, in order to burnish with a morning smile the piled masses, was done by Mr. Crisp and Mr. Scrape, because it wanted the muscle of powerful men. After completing their task, the two men each took a large raw turnip and bit them, and ate them, with the same gusto as another man would have devoured a tender peach; and reveling in the delightful repast, which would have choked any but the relative of an ostrich, they left the market, intending to skull their small boat over to the navy-yard, on some business relative to their daily pursuits.

Mrs. Seiser was left the possessor and empress of her ten feet square, and patiently did she preside in its flowery domain, where the negotiable commodities were congregated, and where it was her especial duty to wait upon special waiters, and vend to wenders in the street-path, and the well-known faces that appear daily, and some who may be termed intermittent, and others who were visitors but once in a single week. The daughters of Scotia appeared, and with a peculiar taste and test, seemed governed by the astringent rules of the close keeper and vigilant amasser of the root of all evil—but of how much good, no second Solomon has ventered to surmise. The sparkling gems of the emerald isle halted, and run into an elaborate dissertation of the crying evil of market-women taking too high a stand in their prices, and wound up the monologue by bidding half price. The gems of the native mines also shone with a brilliancy of knowledge in regard to value and conjectured cost, and having exhausted the argument, paid the first price, and received nothing but credit for the social eloquence. The chamber-maid, and the waiting-lady, and young ladies who are helpers to others well qualified to help themselves, were liberal with their employers' money; and the landlady, who never owned any land, but kept boarders, who had exchanged references in order to make things appear genteel, told the history of half her boarders, and named all their referees with most punctilious detail, and forgot the fact a half hour afterwards; and nearly all the ladies might be seen in what the domestic circle has long continued to term "dishabille"—being in that state, when there is the least state in carriage and clothing, and which induced the old lady to remark that it was the proper state for ladies to appear in, who traveled through a market, because they looked so much more like domestic bodies, who had good hearts, always willing to lavish their kindnesses on other bodies that circulated in the nurseries at home—and so some pricing, and some cheapening, and others talking loud and laughing in quiet, and others buying in a whisper, the market-hours rolled on, filled with forms and a variety of faces, from the rosy in the unartificial path of nature, to the rosy in the well-known path whose fountain head is the head of a whiskey barrel—while, during the run of the morning hours, the chopping of the sharp cleavers, the cries of the aproned apprentice-boys, and the laugh of the premier at his stall, and the important and high-toned conversation of some huge public officer, who catered for a family of seventeen, might be heard echoed from the ceiling of the hollow market, and losing themselves in the newer noises that haunted the chambers of the shambles.

At noon, or thereabouts—for it is very difficult to tell when meridian has arrived by the four-and-sixpenny "Lepines," that appear to run in that vicinity as if the spot had been chosen as a race-course, where the watches run as independent as the jolly figures that carried them, and where time would have been ashamed to show himself, had it not been for the shining chronometer in heaven, so frequently was the former mortified by being called too slow, and then again slandered for being too fast; whereas the ancient gentleman was always sober, and straight forward, and right, and the misdemeanor always lay with false indices, whose hands stole ahead, or lingered like sluggards in a whiskey dream—at noon, by the repeater of Monsieur Sol, whose time is sure, Mrs. Seiser, catching an interval of rest, sat down to indulge in a cold cut and a cup of coffee from the neighboring refectory. What customer in that vicinity ever analyzed that immortal and glorious article sold near the public markets, and bearing the patriotic cognomon "Columbian Coffee?" Who could do it without a smile? Heaven preserve us from compounds that half and struggle in their passage, as if unwilling to pass their counterfeit selves upon the poor palate! This coffee was one, and the recipe may be deemed an adjunct to the five thousand receipts of Mr. McKenzie, in any subsequent edition of his useful work. We copy it in all sincerity: five-eighths parts of roasted

peas, two-eighths ditto of salmon colored pulverized beans, and one eighth ditto of pure Java coffee, warranted to contain no other article—none—or money returned. But there was another kind, made by a manufacturer in opposition to the "Columbian," entitled the "dark Rio," which had a sale nearly as extensive as the patriotic juice: it was a compound, and consisted of three-fourths of roasted rye, one-eighth of brown beans, and one-eighth of "Rio coffee"—all warranted by the maker of twelve years standing in the "dark Rio" market.

Is it a wonder that the respectable market-tenders, the gentlemanly porters, and the scholarly butcher-boys, who graduated in the college of active sciences, and others of their kidney and warm temperaments, should now and then prefer the small destructive measure of alcohol to the watery drain of domestic beans, and the mouldy fluid from associated rye or peas, made the color of London smoke, and which never had an atom of spice when made to combine with the lingering dust of a coffee mill! No—they were individuals of strong taste. Look on the long bench of that refectory, elegantly situated eight feet under ground, opposite to the identical spot where the old lady is indulging herself with a diminutive cup of "dark Rio"—there he is, the juvenile jewel who scrapes the stall of his premier in the large meat line—behold him sipping, what? ay—that 's the question—he dips his lips into the patent Rio, and a shade of inquisitiveness passes over his jolly face—and he puts down his cup—he 's in a "brown study"—no! he is simply wondering what in the name of heaven they have given him—he tastes the bodyless liquid like pale sherry—got pale because of its departed spirit; he wonders what improvement has recently been made in coffee manufacturing—"none, as he knows on"—has a patent been recently taken out to improve the make, and color, and price of coffee? they patent every think—why not the mode of growing, grinding, and straining coffee? He drinks the whole cup at a draught—and his wonder and liquid vanish together. Now he cuts through a substance called an apple-pie—it is a formidable circle, and measures thirty-six inches in circumference, the upper crust uniformly cadaverous, stiff, adhesive, and forms a body that reposes upon an interpolated layer of stewed apples with their birth-day relatives, pits and stems; what humanity in the cook, not to separate the family! There are grains of New Orleans sugar, semi-solved and scattered, to mix their sweetness with the unctuous neighborhood; and there are rills of fat trying to run through at right angles, and intent upon saturating the under crust with its own oily self, and endeavoring to keep it of the modified texture and pale color of bleached gum. He cuts it—and anon he swallows one half of that enchanted pie. What a Sampson with a jaw-bone for pies!—Lo! his fork is in the brown body of a modern dough-nut—all modern, and of course combining all the improvements of "latter day saints"—in the selection of ingredients in mixing, in "puffing"—whilom "raising"—in handling with a skimmer—in placing in the molten lard, clean and sweet as a new-fallen nut—in reclaiming it from the pot with its dark brown countenance—in depositing it to drain the drops that turned as white as the winter snow. Is it so? no! this modern thing is not the ancient light-headed, brown-bodied, delightful Dutch nut that our ancestors were wont to make, when Christmas came with its snows and blows, and which was wont to pass our palates with the free rendition of a school-boy's blessing—No! times have changed, and dough-nuts have deteriorated. Now he bites into this modern nut, a lump of half risen dough with sugar mixed in the proportion of one to ninety-nine—one per cent of saccharine! Rise up, ye Dutch Vrows of the olden time! It is thoroughly saturated with salt fat, and colored of a dirty red hue; the grease can be expressed from every pore. The boy swallows it all! What a patriot in grain! which simply means a modern patriot. The dough-nut has vanished—he seizes another;—that boy is a hero—he masticates number two, a co-constituent of number one; his deglutition is finished—and mark the sequel! he rises, wipes his mouth, expectorates, goes into the market, dances as a matter of habit, and shuffles—for that is a feature in his game—then he vanishes in a neighboring groggery for a small dose of spirits, to keep down the spirit of the modern nut, that cannot find a resting place—nor bowels of compassion.

The sun had passed through more than one half of his journey, with a silence seldom noticed, and perhaps never commented upon. How noiseless he appears to slip along in his gilded path up the blue concave, until he reaches the highest step in his far-off palace, where he lingers not a moment, but as if tired with ascending, and only to ease his giant limbs, down he appears to stride in the same blue path, in the same rapid space, and in the singular stillness that might be a gentle hint to a number of the recipients of his bounty, that the hinges of the tongue were never made for perpetual motion! On he passed, shedding his rays of nurturing character on all the walkers of the serpentine streets and crooked paths, who could boast the glorious privileges of life in the highways, liberty in the by-ways, and the pursuit of happiness in certain very curious, and close and secret ways. He pounced upon saint and upon sinner, the miserable only in their own opinion, and the happy in the opinion of all others—and of the latter class was Cap-

tain John, whose line and hooks were cast into the edges of the strong current that run like rapid river-steeds around the point of Corlear's Hook.

"Luck—luck," thought the Captain—there's no luck, or any animal of its undefined character, in water; it must belong above water; it is my luck to hook a two pound fish, but is it his luck to be caught? A black-fish is a very sensible fellow in his own element; he don't band together with his school; they're no politicians; always independent. Who is their pot-house companion? none. Who is their shouter with granite throat? none. Damned sensible fellows you are, my dark friends. No man ever saw you caught at the poles—no; there only are trapped the lean shad." The Captain laughed at his own conceit, and was about to continue in the same soliloquizing strain, when a loud laugh reached him, emanating from Silly Billy, as he was called in the neighborhood, being one of the few figures in this humane world who may be said to wander up and down the paths of intelligence year after year, without gaining the slightest hint of the standing, or name, or fame of his immediate ancestor. And how much the gainer would Silly Billy have been, if he had been nominated, and put on large bills, as a candidate for office? No slander could have been uttered against his progenitor, because, like many others in the political circle of partizans, his father never had a name, high or low, as far as modern scrutiny could develope—and as a consequence, the traducers would be kept in their black holes, and not venture to defame a forefather of a candidate who was a mere shade, even in the penetrating eye of the political serpent, who coils around the domestic pillar where the common fame of a man's household is written.

"And who are you?" said the Captain.

"Doesn't you know Billy? Oh shivvers!"

"Yes, I nose you," said the Captain, throwing in his line; "you're a nondescript, and not a clean specimen, in sooth."

"No, I isn't—I'm Sally's son. Vot a whaler you've cotched; isn't you a clammer?" said the simpleton, pre-supposing that a fish-catcher must be a fish-vender.

"If you wasn't too silly for the job, I'd plunge you in the tide, to see if the bait was on the hook," observed the Captain.

"I've a notion you wouldn't," said Billy.

"And why not, you rummer?" said the Captain.

"No, I doesn't, now. Momy drinks wid the blue-jackets from the yard, but I doesn't—ax Bungy."

"The devil trust you or your dam—you'll be a chip of the old block," muttered the Captain.

"No, I doesn't, now corjils is my likwers—it puts a body a-sleep on a dock-log," said Billy, grinning.

"Well, now hold your tongue, or I'll throw you overboard."

"No you doesn't, nurther—Sam'd murder y' an ye did; and he's a iron clammer," retorted Billy.

"When did he say so, you red herring?" asked the Captain.

"He's a iron chap, and 'd lick a river full er yous," said the boy, rising and scratching, as if a thousand combined bites solicited the friction of finger nails.

"Well, he's right," observed the Captain; "I was only joking."

The Captain looked at the poor boy, whose whole wardrobe consisted of a shirt and trousers and chip hat, of the value of some thirty cents in the aggregate. There was intelligence in his eyes; his face was fair, and he looked as if fortune had hung his destiny on the lowest pegs of her circle, where he had no claim to be—but the moment he opened his lips, and the words came forth, the fool was apparent, and fortune seemed consistent with herself.

"I s'pose you want the fish you cotch?" said Billy, grinning, and looking at the Captain with an unabashed eye.

"If you want them to eat, you can have 'em," said the Captain.

Billy uttered no thanks, but kept laughing while he picked up the fish that lay around, and when he gathered the few near the Captain, he started from the pier, smiling, and went up towards the street, where his fancy led him generally when in quest of his sleeping apartment, or his delighted mama.

That must be the skiff of Tom Scrape coming out of the Wallabout bay, thought the Captain, looking over in the direction of the navy-yard. Yes, they are coming like a small speck in the distance. Halloo! what have we here? a drop of rain, as I live; and, whew! what have we yonder? mountainous masses out of the north-east; they appear as sudden as a puff of wind, and sometimes contain a body of water that gives them an appearance as blue as old ocean. There they come; and how many drops are ready to pour down upon us with not an instant's notice; but here is a shelter near by—so I'll even wait for the thunder-dogs to growl, and let slip their mimic deluge. There comes the wind; and now, my river craft, douse your white wings, or I'll dive deep if you don't dive deeper.

True, even as the Captain had predicted, the summer storm came on with a quick march, sending its windy couriers of hurried puffs before, to give notice of the tremendous main body that rolled on darkly, column after column, clouding the air, clambering over the horizon, and sending down detached drops of

rain, large and heavy, that struck the earth with a loud sound. The atmosphere in the north-east was crowded with dense masses of deep and threatening vapor, and not far distant was seen the impervious veil of water that descended with rapidity in millions of drops, and in such rapid succession as to make them appear like lines of streaming water from the windows of heaven, passing to the earth in an oblique direction, and to which there was no end nor halt, but all came straight as if launched by the Almighty hand. One blaze of living light cast its reflection over the water, and the earth, and the animal in the street, and the passenger unsheltered, and the brute that walked through the swelling sluices of the paved ways, and caused many an eye to blench, and then followed the continuous and approaching rolls of the loud thunder, beginning in the distance, and hurling as it were in every new discharge a louder shattering sound above the spot where the Captain had stowed his thin-clad form, to await the passage of the stormy time. The swollen and fierce tide, which was making up the river with its fulness and force, had arrived at the utmost of its speed, and in dashing past the sharp point where the Captain was housed, was met by the redoubled force of the north-east wind, that came in its anger and its might, raising the waves to an enormous height, and throwing back their broad white heads and green bodies to tumble over in fret and foam, and return again to the sharply-disputed contest. In this roar, and echoing of wind, and roll of thunder, and dashing of tumultuous waves against the docks and small craft that tumbled with the readiness of corks, the eyes of the Captain were fixed upon the small boat and the forms of Tom Scrape and Sam Crisp, with their frail skulls, pulling with the strength of galley slaves inured for a quarter of a century to the hardy and heavy oar. The rain had not reached them in its strength and denseness, and the looker-out upon the lashed waves of the curling river, could see the mighty efforts they made to reach the vicinity of the point, with a strong sweeping tide somewhat in their favor; but the dashing currents of the wind retarding their progress in an equal or greater ratio.

"They gain," muttered the Captain, with an eye eager in its watch of the slow progress of the two men. "They gain, but very slowly; there! that stream of blasting fire from the low clouds over their heads has struck them blind—no! they come. What arms such men have, and hearts stouter than arms—the tempest can't quail 'em, nor the thunder frighten 'em, though the flash should shatter the boat, and take their footing from under 'em. They gain slowly. Cling to your skulls, my water-dogs—they can't drown you—the wave is not in this river to drown you."

The Captain spoke like one who had wagered his sum of happiness and life upon the safe arrival of the two men, and he strained his eyes to catch the form of the small boat and the hats of the laboring rowers. Now they were visible on the ridge of the boiling wave, and were seen tugging with iron nerves, and their backs to the sleet of the driving storm, and eyes upon the waters they were leaving behind. And now they were in the trough of the waters, between the white edges of the uplifted curls; and the large flood of rain was rising inch by inch in their small skiff—and then again the sheet of glaring lightning passed in momentary vividness, and the voice of the broad thunder had gained new power from the dark piles above, and shaken the earth, and the waters, and the heart of man, and the form and instinct of the complaining brute; still the men came on, with no paleness of fear nor relaxation of firm muscular power, but indomitable courage; and now they seemed enclosed in a surrounding curtain of dense water descending in masses; but they strove on, and a minute's space brought a slower flood of falling rain, and the Captain saw the strugglers, and their boat riding over the waves.

"No, not now," muttered the Captain; "that gust of wind and rolling swell have thrown over the small bark, their oars are gone, the boat is bottom up, and the full length of Sam Crisp is upon it; and there is the Water Dog, with the bold but easy stroke of the diver and calm swimmer, unfearing, strong in his knowledge and power, now parting the waves with his long arms, in regular and measured strokes, and then floating face up like a drift log that cannot sink, thinking of all except drowning, and casting an eye on his friend and partner, who clings to the boat's bottom, with looks that give assurance of safety, and personal unconcern, and silent endurance.

The Water Dog battled the waves again coolly and with deliberation, and shook from his front the dark hair that floated over his eyes. On he pushed—up on the wave-ridge and down in the hollows—nor seemed to heed the rain, and the wind, and the swelling noise of the thunder. He cast his eyes upon the boat, and his efforts were renewed; and with the inexhausted strength of one whose very patience, and presence of mind, and tact in swimming, would sustain him above water for hours, he made an extraordinary exertion, and dashed for the floating boat—but missed it.

At that moment, like a feather in the wind, a small fishing smack passed by the spot, with her sails tied down under the spar, and a voice came from the driving hull, "brave it, boy, brave it!" and the next moment a shield of mist and sleet hid the flyer from sight.

The Water Dog still went on undaunted, watching the coming waves, and throwing his glances around with the same composure as he would have done on land, and casting his whole power in a series of exertions, he finally made a grasp at the boat and reached its bottom. There he breathed like a strong and tired wrestler, willing to renew a trial with the surrounding element, and forced the water from his swollen hair. The skiff, with her double burden, was tossed in the caves and on the margins of the billows, and rode on without helm or oar, amid the surging waters, while words were exchanged by the two men, and Sam complained that his tobacco was drenched with salt water, and his friend swore that no drop of brine could wash his teeth, and never could penetrate his lips, without his consent.

The boat continued the course the tide drove it, until the lull of the rain and wind gave an opportunity for those on shore to rescue; and a short time only elapsed, when a boat from one of the slips, manned with rough forms, and tough hands, and strong arms, was seen making for the floating friends. There was no fear in the rough rescuers to face danger on the water, as that had been the scene of their lives, where all their tact was learned and their strength exerted.

These men reached the spot, where Tom Scrape and his companion were clinging to the skiff; the waves were still rolling high, and it become a matter of some nicety to relieve the well-soaked Water Dog and his friend: but the ready minds of the men, apt at such expedients, extended a line so as to be available and serve the purpose, and the two were taken from their own boat, which was towed into the slip, where all the party landed without further difficulty.

Few acknowledgments were made by the rescued men, though not wanting in proper feelings, and that irresistible sense of obligation that flows from reason as well as instinct; for these men were all of a class who deem such favors as things of course, even when peril is apparent, and other men might pronounce the danger too formidable to be encountered. A few laughs were passed around at the mishap of being tossed from a tempest of wind into a boiling bath of cold water, and some odd jokes were uttered as to the relative weight of a boatman, soaked or unsoaked by salt or fresh water, with or without the flannel shirt and kersey trowsers.

The skiff of Mr. Crisp was hauled up and drained of the salt contents, and placed upon the water again, light and tight as the hearts of its owners, and in a few minutes the two men joined the spot where the Captain had sheltered himself and witnessed the whole scene, persuaded without argument that neither would go to the bottom, and muttering, upon discovering their rescue, "there's no drowning such sea-dogs—I begin to think Sam is a pup of the floating breed."

"It wouldn't 'ave happened," said Tom, approaching the Captain, "if Sam's oar hadn't guv out. I told 'im he'd break the thing—there's no skull could stood it out."

"Well, what's the use of barking at a dog? an't it naterul, Captin," said Sam, "to lay on your might and main in sich a blow?—the devil seemed to work on' a thousand pair of bellisses—I never heerd sich a row in the river."

"It was tremendous," said the Captain; "I was thinking of the locker said to belong to a Mr Jones, among sailors, where I suppose there's any number of the drowned. Did it not weaken you, Tom?"

"No, sir," said Tom; "I've been longer overboard, and expect to be agin, and kin tread water for hours; but a body must keep his presence of sense, and know that the limbs are enough to keep 'im up, if rightly used, and not abused by damned senseless kicking. There's more seamanship in swimming, then in managin' a ship."

"It requires great coolness," said the Captain.

"Now here's Sam," said Tom, "must wet his tobacker like a goose, by opening his mouth?

"Who 're you barkin' at," retorted Sam, "d' y' s'pose every man's got the wind of a racer? damn it, if a man could only grasp any thing solid,—but water runs through the fingers, and makes no fight."

"Well, I must have a drink, to keep the cold off," said Tom. "Come, Sam."

"No, I don't hold to keepin' cold out, with a glass of something worse."

"Well, you mayn't drink, said Tom, "but you know, Captin, he's been pretty well soaked to-day."

"I'm going up to widders, to change my duds.

"I'll walk up, Sam," said the Captain; who took his basket and fishing tackle, and the two soon reached the house of Mrs. Seiser, leaving Tom Scrape to make his entrance into the bar-room of Sandy Bungspunger; and while "wetting his whistle," and satisfying his desire for a warm drink, after his immersion, pour out his complaint to the savage looking landlord against the folly of his partner pulling on a slim oar against the currents of a tempest, while he himself could row for miles, and not shiver the feebler skull with which he had amused himself.

In the quiet parlor of Mrs. Seiser sat that lady and Miss Angelica Seiser, with Madam La Pump and her small dog, while on the rag carpet, in rolls and frolics, Master George Washington Seiser and Benjamin his smaller kin were indulging in smothered glee, and

were as active as monkeys. The Captain took his seat; and while supper was satisfying the sapping, he related the accident encountered by the two men, and which they had survived with so much unconcern. The account was filled in and drawn out with all the enthusiasm of the Captain's best narrative manner; and the story gave rise to much surprise, and to the fall of opinions and explanations much after the following import:

"Good lordy gracious!" said Mrs. Seiser; "them fellers 'ill go to the bottom yet—stop till Tom wentures out with too much liquor on board, for he drinks sometimes, and then I wouldn't insure his not being a dish of chowder for the sharks."

"And a high-spirited dish it 'ill be," said the Captain.

"Oh! did you ever?" said Angelica. "Wot! in all that rivwer of rain—in that skiff, only big enough for a wash-tub, as I told Madam La Pump? Why, said I, Madam La Pump—that skiff, said I, is a good sized tub, says I. Who would wenture, says I, in a wooden tub, says I."

"Oh, mon Dieu!" uttered Madam, opening her eyes, and breathing awfully, "go to sea in one wash-tub! blisser me, mon chere Angel, c'et possible!" and then, as if to give force to her uttered surprise, she unconsciously pinched the leg of her lap-dog, who threw himself into a heap of wounded sensibility and cried aloud.

"Momy," said the youngest Seiser, "an't the fleas bitin' the dog?"

"Hold your tongue, you little imp," said the Angel.

"Fleas!" said Madam, giggling; "oh, no, Benny, Nappo nevair keep such companions—oh, morbleu!"

"More blue," said young Seiser—"that's what they say when a man gets drunk."

"You don't comprehend," said the Captain; "Madam did not mean blue, as we have it in spiritual English, but morbleu, when translated, only means the breath that blows it out. And pray, Miss Angelica, how did you terminate the dispute between you and your neighbor Mrs. McNoddy; or is the war still in the unfinished state, and under the tongue?"

"It's unfinished, Captain," answered Miss Angelica, laughing, with a slight touch of resentment visible in her manner; "but I gave her a lesson the other e-wenin' that made her wish she never had wentured to speak light of me."

"Leave you alone for a full measure of sharp talk," said Mrs. Seiser, "if there's call for it."

"Well," said the Angel, "I had an opportunity, and I wasn't wexed to use it, to tell her a piece of my mind, as I told Madam La Pump—and I'll tell you about it."

"Fire away," said the Captain. "If you couldn't demolish the battery of the McNoddy's, then I'll dive deep and be — disappointed; so go on with the siege."

"Well, I begun," said Miss Seiser, "by asking her what inducement she had to disperse the character of a lone woman, and a single one; and, says I, Mrs. McNoddy, says I, my character, mam, don't want any comments, says I, from you, or any one in your forlorn state! And, says she, Miss Seiser, says she, who do you call forlorn? says she; haven't I a lawful husband, says she, and a ch'racter in lawful wedlock standin'? I s'pose, says she, you call that boasting, says she; but it's what every honest woman ought to have, says she.

"And, says I, Mrs. McNoddy, says I, you ought to be careful wot words you use, mam; of your character I want to know nothing; but when you use words and 'sinuations, says I, you ought to know where you cast 'em; and when you tell a body she's 'no better than she should be,' and use them defamations, says I, take care you're right.

"And, says she to me, Miss Seiser, when any one convinces me I've defamed any one of my sex, then it 'ill be time to back out and bend down, I persume, says she.

"And, says I, Mrs. McNoddy, says I, since you appear to covet the disposition to slander and to stick to it, I must say, mam, that you've evwery trait for that amiable character, says I."

"Then you hit her," said the Captain.

"And, says she to me, says she, Miss Seiser, if you wish to fastin' on a mother of two sweet children a bad character, you'll find your own, mam, your own wery well known. I say known, Miss Seiser."

"Why, the impu-dence!" said Mrs. Seiser.

"A Greek in small coats," uttered the Captain.

"Oh! she is 'orrible," said Madam La Pump.

And at this stage of the relation by Miss Angelica Seiser, her eyes appeared to be lessening in the pupils thereof, and there was fire in them, and a scintillation, and a sort of spirited sparks emanated therefrom, not the coarse red class that play and toss somersets on the top of a chimney, the contents of which is burning in a blaze of sooty inflammation, to the delight of boys and the chagrin and mortification of the master sweep who looks on with horror. No; but those smaller ethereal emissions that light up to brightness the face and the glorious eyes, as if the mind, and heart, and all their subjects, were ready to pour the heat of internal anger upon the selected object of opposition.

"I'll tell you what, Mrs. Noddy, says I, when I asperse character as you have—mark me, mam, says I, as you have—I hope I

won't want for common honesty, and stick to the false utterance of bad things; and more, mam, says I, some things are whispered of a certain married lady that I will not repeat, says I; no, mam, it's beneath me to retail sich trash, says I.

"Miss Seiser, says she—and she rose right up, as pale as a picter of Ice—Miss Seiser, if I'm to set in my own house while abuse is poured upon me, it must be in company that's respectable—and I hope I'm understood, says she, that I say that I don't consert with any other kind of people, says she."

"Oh! wery well, says I, Mrs. McNoddy, says I, I understand you fully, mam, and I hope, says I, you'll understand me, says I; whether I retail the discourse I've heard of a certain married lady, who shall be nameless, says I, depends upon what is whispered by that married lady about her neighbors, says I, married and single."

"Wery well, Miss Seiser," says she, "when I hear of slanders and aspersions of character against the mother of two little children, as peaceable as lambs"——

"And at that very moment," said Angelica, "the smallest little Tommy McShanty McNoddy cried out in a wonderful cry, that something was a bitin' 'im; and Mrs. McNoddy started like a ghost to quiet the young bawler—and then returned to finish."

"I know, says she, that there's actions for personal assaults of character, as well as for batteries and grand burglaries; but don't trouble yerself, Miss, to say any more. I beg you wouldn't, Miss, says she—good evwenin', mam."

"And, says I, good night, mam,—don't trouble yourself about me, mam; for you'll find, mam, says I, that slander, like water, 'ill find its own levwel; and I'm happy, mam, to find that you're contented to remain in the muss you've made for your own genteel comfort. Don't trouble yourself, mam, to light me down, mam, says I; the stair-way's straighter than some people's stories, Mrs. McNoddy. I wish you good night, mam—a still tongue, mam, though it don't make a wise head in our sex, may make an unoffensive one, says I—and away I come," said Angelica, in conclusion; "and I declare, when I looked up to the winder, she actually snuffed out the candle, her hand trembled so."

"Well," said the Captain, "all's well that ends in mere words; it's my opinion that she will not slander again, until some new neighbor moves in, or near the house she occupies."

"Why, Captain," said Angelica, "she is the queerest woman I ever met in the whole course of my life. She's warm-hearted, and kind, and affectionate; and yet she always talks of acquaintances in sich a way as to drive 'em out of the neighborhood. If a married lady visits her with a dress a little better than common, or with a new silk gown, she opens her eyes, and wonders why the woman's husband could ever be guilty of sich extravagance; and then she makes a nice calculation as to the cost, and concludes it is a second-hand frock, an old body with new skirts, or a white silk dyed and re-trimmed, and perhaps made at half price, or something of that kind.

"And if a girl goes to see her with a beau, she wonders where the girl evwer got 'im. It was the third beau—two had deserted before—and for cause, yes; and why? that's the thing. Why should both beaux leave one after another? she could tell yes, but as to sayin' anything against the women in her neighborhood, she wouldn't—no; but still, how fortunate for the two beaux who had gone; what a narrer escape they had; and then," continued Angelica, "she'd shake her head, and talk of martyrs to temper, and husbands that trembled before a scold; and then, what a pity, she'd say, that all men were not the same as McNoddy was when he courted her, with all the remains of a gallant sergeant in his carriage and martial bearing; aye, there was courtship commenced by a keen, indescribable glance at a distance; then succeeded by amorous looks—the looks of the soldier and the lover—which gradually, and with glowin' fervvor, neated until came the fainting moments of proffering the ring. Aye, that was the moment of moments for her in a summer storm of trembles to see the martial form of McNoddy, the sergeant, at two pounds and a half per month, beggin', yes, beggin'; and she, she refused, with a blush that made her light-headed and red as a miniature; but afterwards she accepted two rings with a joy that made her dream of Sergeant McNoddy multiplied by a whole company.

"And, says I, Mrs. McNoddy, says I, if I had a beau who was courtin' me, says I"—

"And what do y' think? she absolutely broke into a laugh that shook the candlestick on the table."

"Why, what a nondescript," said the Captain.

"More like a wonder of scripture," said Mrs. Seiser.

"There," said the Captain, "Wash., go and see who is knocking at the door."

The little fellow went and opened the door of the small house, and ushered in another character, in smiles, and in appearance dissimilar to any of the social community.

CHAPTER IV.

Several new characters—one with a message.

The visiter ushered in by the young messenger, was the sole representative of a deceased Seiser, nephew to Mrs. Seiser and cousin-german to the Angel, who had bothered Mrs. McNoddy for certain slanderous whispers in regard to a lone woman. Mr. Edward Seiser, the visiter, made his bow, with the ease and grace gathered together from the pleasing lessons of Monsieur Berault, a celebrated cotilion master of the time, to all the ladies in rotation; not to the youngest first, for that was not feasible, as he knew not which might claim, rightfully, the juvenile jewel, so earnestly esteemed among ladies single and husbandless. Then he gave the Captain a shake of the hand, and received the same from the latter, accompanied with a smile that seemed to rise up out of the spot where good feeling is nurtured—not such a smile as appears upon the visage of a great man, who honors poor relatives with a nod, and common men—that is to say, men in common dresses, who labor for a living—with notice. No! not that artificial set of muscular contractions that rolls up the features at any time as a mere matter of habit, making the smiler look ridiculous in thus endeavoring to impose upon another the vast value and virtue centered in the suavity of a man great and lofty in his own opinion, but not in the opinion of any other, except his debtor.

Edward Seiser, thus welcomed by all, not with cold formality, but the sincerity that breathes in the honset nature of the unpresuming, was a clerk in a store in the first ward of this celebrated city, near the spot where men of all shades of honor, and talent, and Christainly straits of heart—the Jew, the Sadducee, the moralist and the Christian—buy and sell every thing; and this includes honor, and honor includes common honesty; which never, on account of the scarcity of the commodity, is disposed of except at a heavy premium.

With a salary of some four hundred dollars per annum, this young man, not past his first score of summers, was a genuine economist; although he never read a single essay upon domestic economy, except the solitary fargment from Poor Richard—"a penny saved is penny earned." Eschewing the ordinary habits of young gentlemen who delight in flourishing at the billiard saloons, restaurateurs, poule tables, and segar emporiums, he chose a different road for his rambles, different stopping places for his rests; and, as a consequence, at the end of each year found his pocket somewhat heavier than those others, the extravagant set of excitable spirits who, out of a salary of seven hundred dollars, payable quarterly, very easily and with a quiet conscience spend a thousand dollars per annum—and pay it nightly.

When the sun is up, and shines upon the business and forms of these latter classes, how honest is every feature of their faces! how industrious their apparent characters! how staid the whole looks of the men! but when evening claims a darkness for the world, and things that never move in the sun, and places that are closed in the run of day, are abroad and open, how different the small clerk, the whiskered book-keeper, the confidential, the cash, the banking and the street clerks! And where are they? Wherever money can be squandered, health sunk, honesty uprooted, and feeling deadened!

"And now," said Mr. Edward, "since I haven't seen you," including Madam La Pump, "for a thousand years, how do you do—one and all?"

"Bless me, how old you make people appear! thousand years! Pumpy, hear that," said Angelica.

"Oui—yes! ten thousand is all de same," said Madam.

"Now that's Philosophy," said the Captain; "you both know that you look as young as you did twenty years ago, and care not whether we call you eighteen or eighteen hundred—eh!"

"That's rather extravagant, Captain," said the Angel, "to joke us women for being and looking too young; how can we help it, if with all our exertions to show our age, we can't succeed in appearing out of our teens?"

This change for the Captain's coin drew the laugh against him; but he enjoyed it. When they disbelieved his small compliments, he felt quite happy. If they ever seemed to swallow his flatteries, and digest them without scruple, it made him miserable; he called it lip-sinning.

"I don't blame you, Angel," said the Captain, "for never growing old—none of your sex do; they are like a portrait taken fifty years since; there is the woman, and there she'll be, the same in ten years more; and as to the living form, the heart and feelings are the same from marriage to death; women never grow old—eh, Ned?"

"No, sir, not in their own opinion, though that opinion may be a half century in maturing," said Mr. Edward.

"True; and what do you think, Mrs. Seiser, upon the subject of growing old, as you have more knowledge than the ladies?" asked the Captain.

"I never trouble my head with the subject," said Mrs. Seiser; "gracious knows we're all old enough to be richer, for pure comfort; but s'pose we should call you twenty years old, Captain?"

"Then I'd imitate the ladies, and never contradict you," said the Captain. "I hold to one thing—never to contradict a lady; and that is part of my Christianity: even if they tell a foolish story, let 'em—it does 'em good."

"You would make a beau for courting equal to Sergeant McNoddy, in his fine days," said Angelica.

"Don't talk of Madam McNoddy," said the French lady, "she is one all talk peoples."

"And what do you think, Captain," said Mr. Edward, "brought you my special visit this evening?"

"I'm a poor calculator, sir," responded the Captain; "so, without waiting 'till one guesses in vain for an hour, let us have the latest intelligence, as you come from the busy portion of our great emporium."

"It is this," said Edward: "our great aristocratical relation, who sips his wine in Mahogany Place, No. 13, has actually invited all the Seisers to make him a visit on a certain day or evening, to see him about some business; now what business I have, or can have, to interest a man who rides in his carriage like a nabob, is more than I can divine; and what business the ladies can have with him I know not, though you, Captain, can perhaps explain."

"I've been expecting thus much," said the Captain; "yes, and for some time. Well, now we are to hear what we are unacquainted with; a recent letter from England induced me to believe that we might be summoned for consultation."

"Why didn't you inform me, Captain, if you knew?" inquired Edward Seiser. "No, you mistake," said the Captain; "I did not know of this invitation; but supposed that it might come; that the great financier might want to open a budget of proposals for sundry matters of business. Well, we must all go, and Madam La Pump in company, if it be but to see how a Seiser lives, who once scraped through the world like a changer of sweated guineas and a purchaser of clipped coin, and who once lived by "hook and by crook."

"What is dat, Capetan Tonnebo? asked Madam.

"Why, as we live here," said the Captain. "You must know that when, as in our case, people live honestly, and by the reward of labor, without superfluities, the world says they live "by hook and by crook," and "just as they can catch it"—with sundry other noted sentences—cheap, undoubtedly, as breath is with the mob."

"By !hook and by crook," said Madam. "I sall know de meaning wen dey speak of poor peoples."

"You are a happy woman," said the Captain, "and only one of the multitude who live in the hook by crook style, which includes the comfortable. If you are only content as we are here, why the purposes of our being's aim here are fulfilled; for in my opinion, as superfluities enter one by one the front door, comforts file out one by one of the ranks—because the former bring cares, and cares must have a nurse, physical or mental. Now, as your cares are principally confined to the attentions bestowed upon your lap-dog, you don't want a thing in the shape of a superfluous interloper to wean you from your duty to the person of your young friend; and by-the-by, why not exhibit the snow-ball to Mr. Edward?"

Madam La Pump thus appealed to, with a countenance somewhat rosy for a lady of more than forty years, living without the superfluities hinted at, unfolded to the clerical eyes of young Mr. Seiser her bosom friend, in the shape of Napolean, the white pug, and one who was warmed in winter, cooled in summer, scolded in spring, lectured in autumn, and daily talked to on all subjects that crossed the mind and fancy of his little mistress. Some of her verbal gifts to the little fellow were given with a keen glance of the eye, and a frown that would have brought tears from him, if little dogs like him had been made to shed drops of sorrow. He knew when a storm was beating, that is, when a storm of talk was beating on the drum of his ears; and then he hung his head, and ears, and tail, and remained white and silent—waiting for good humor and food.

Wonderful gifts to creation! and who was to blame? where were the widowers who should have slipped in and relieved the poor snow-ball of Madam's overflow of incessant sensibility?

Mr. Edward gazed at the form of the small pug, and took him in his hands with much apparent admiration, and then scolded the small boys for pinching the tail of the quadruped, whom he eulogized with terms of the superlative degree, and with a countenance of unimpeachable earnestness, while the Angel indulged in what might be termed an interior giggle, unheard and unseen.

The young man passed encomiums enough upon poor pug, to have authorised him to aspire to office if he had been a politician; but, unfortunately or fortunately, the independent little patriot was not; he had too much sterling instinct to be led away on the brutal path of the partizan. No—he smelt the danger of wearing the dignified robes of an Alderman—viz: of having every little puppy in the ward running after him for loaves and fishes after his election. It might do for common dogs—the fighting bull—the English pointer—the German mastiff—the Grecian mongrel—but not for a lap-dog, whose mistress was a voluntary caterer for his supper-table, and whose warm berth in the gentle lap of Gallic gen-

tility presented a bar to political ambition. We honor that pug therefore; he never thrust his amiable snout in the city pans, to draw milk from a corporation source. What a lesson to his larger brothers with half his number of legs, and not half his discretion! Many were the praises bestowed upon the pet, who stood regardless of the verbal incense poured upon him. It has been said that a little flattery does wonders, and although it has been proved in many instances, yet we are inclined to believe such as the small pug must be exempt from the Shakspearian saw—it requires another kind of animal to feel the tickle of the greased teeth.

But although the quadruped disregarded the complimentary verbality, yet his owner was all attention; and when Mr. Edward appealed to the Captain that Goldsmith was behind the spirit of his own "animated nature," in not treating the lap-class of pugs with more attention, the French lady seemed to take share and share alike with her snow-ball, whatever encomiums fell from the speaker. Philosophy, thought Madam La Pump, teaches the right use of feeling; and here is a mercantile philosopher with feeling for my dog; and how much more ought he to have for that dog's owner! and the little lady committed the common blunder of resplendent characters who wear costly chains, and seals, and golden trinkets only fit for adult blockheads, who, upon discovering a stranger's eye fixed upon their showey bauble, immediately take to themselves all the admiration that may be supposed to be conveyed in the look of the gazer.

The Captain smoked thro' the whole scene, while the small Seisers were at a total loss to understand what was meant by praising a dog that could not gnaw a bone; and the old lady indulged in a long train of thought having relation to the origin of lap-dogs, their original use and after adoption, and progressive improvement in the civilized arms of gentility of Gallic and anglo Gallic character; and whether the pugs originally did not talk, and were doomed, every mother's son and father's daughter, and all the descendants of both, to perpetual silence, by some jealous old French lady, whose rapid speech had been exceeded by the more rapid garrulity of the beautiful race. All the passing time Miss Angelica was busy too in her little domain of thought, and many a sharp mental arrow did she emit at the imaginary form of Mrs. McNoddy, the lady of the celebrated Pimpy McNoddy, merchant and hardware importer, whose airy and elegant counting room—how can it be stated without a large tear of regret? why will the evil tongues of the world cast down into the lowest circle of denominations the lofty operators in useful arts and liberal science? take the rich shoemaker, they call him "snob;" the loftiest climbers on the ladders of earth, "hodmen;" the physician, "quack;" the grandest councellor, "pettifogger;" the skinner of a gentle lamb, "bloody butcher;" the calico merchant, "pirate;" the preachers, "false prophets;" the gentlemanly mercer, "stitchlouse;" and "ninth part of humanity"—as if there were humanity enough in the world to be split into nine parts—the lofty banker, "shaver," and in this instance harnessing a financier in the same team with a barber, despite the announcement formerly seen on a hair cutter's sign in Wall street—"scindo non tondeo"—which was translated by a jolly sailor, "cuts—but he be damn'd, he don't shave like his neighbors"—and after this solemn display of the utter disregard the accumulated wisdom of society shows to the business proprieties of the greatest and most proud characters, can it be a matter of wonder? can it elicit a shade of doubt, when we tell the simple truth, that the counting-room of Pimpy McNoddy, Esq., was called—"old junk shop?"

Is it not to be regretted that the most shining characters, like Mr. McNoddy, suffer, and suffer they must, and all by the bad translation of that stupid booby called the "public?" Let him pass by the splendid "hotel," he translates it "groggery;" he reads "ready-made clothing," and renders them "slop shop." When he sees "ladies' shoemaker," he whispers "cobbler;" when the tin signs read "Jack Pill, M. D.," he utters "horse doctor"—as if, in pursuance of the law of retaliation, the same booby in that way were paying the owners of all these signs, because they humbugged him every day of his life.

The caresses of the little dog ceased, and he was bestowed under the shawl of his mistress. Mr. Edward prepared to depart, and after promising to call on the evening that was to give them all an interview with one of the emperors of the money-market—who was the cash partner of the heavy firm of Grasp, Gripe, Grip and Seiser, merchants, agents, brokers and bankers—he, Mr. Edward, took his leave, after giving to the Captain his address, should the latter wish to see him on the business spoken of.

Curiosity is not confined to character or sex; and after the departure of Mr. Edward Seiser, the whole of the party, excepting the Captain, put their calculating or guessing machinery in trim order, to turn off, twist over, and lengthen out all imaginable reasons that could have induced a very rich man, an emperor of gold and silver, the high governor of the firm of Grasp, Gripe, Grip and Seiser, to send for them—poor, housed in a hovel, compared to the home of the proud, and making their way along the high road with aching hands and limbs, and the bad results of sedentary habits, with the heart sinking at

times under the load of present clouds and prospective darkness, toiling along six days out of seven, whose lengths run deep into the night, week after week, month after month, and all the same confining, unchequered tedium of incessant labor, without enjoying the air that even the small skimming swallow has, in the wildness of his liberty, as he shoots like a dark arrow through the summer streets to gather his invisible food.

Each of the ladies made an effort to get at the most plausible inducement that moved and governed the great man to send for those hitherto not acknowledged as relatives, but beings of an inferior order; and even the little Seisers made an effort to guess, but fell asleep with labor so heavy. After all had strained in vain for the true light that alone could illumine their understandings in regard to the question, the Captain was appealed to as one most likely to solve doubts; but he, whether purposely or only to enjoy a joke, none could tell, gave no more satisfaction than any who had adventured an opinion. In fact, the Captain, on this subject, appeared to think very slowly; and so deep appeared to be the profoundness of his stubborn thought, that he chewed up a couple of inches of his segar without knowing that he was violating one of his rules, and only discovered the fact when he found that his segar was wasting at both ends.

At length he rose from his chair to stretch his contracted limbs, and hinted calmly that they would see, and patience was a poor man's virtue.

"Well, we shill see the great furniture and golden things, I've no doubt. I heerd long ago that some people's homes were palaces, and I s'pose his is one on 'em," observed Mrs. Seiser.

"Yes; and I guess there's Turky carpets from Turky, and French drapery from France, and English ware from the English shops—and, Lor' bless me, who can tell what else?" said Angelica.

"And flower, tòo," said Madam.

"Yes, bless us and save us!" said Mrs. Seiser, flowers in wases, and bokits, and tubs, and tumblers full of nateral and imitation, imported from London, and Paris, and France, and the nurseries"—

"From Pari—ah! I mus see dem—I can make de beautiful as Pari," said Madam.

Before an answer could be given to the little lady's flowery speech, a knock was made at the door, which being opened, admitted Mrs. McNoddy, with hat and shawl, and that other sort of personal estate known by the name of husband. Mr. Pimpy McNoddy, the lawful lord and husband of Mrs. McNoddy, followed as in duty bound, and each made the bending salutation and took a seat.

Pimpy McNoddy was a negotiator in sundries, and the sundries alluded to made up the articles of iron, brass, pewter, lead, zinc, copper, silver, and plated ware, of every shape, straight or distorted, or square, or circular, from a ten-penny nail to a ten hundred pound boiler—through all the intermediate grades of specific gravity; besides old rags, and ropes, and paper, and tools, and tea, and sugar, and coffee in the berry; in fact, every thing that could be picked up by man, or boy, or girl, or woman, along the docks, in streets or yards, in alleys or stables, and in all places where the finger of larceny could move a muscle to take even an oyster knife. Mr. Pimpy McNoddy disdained with a current frown and a silver voice the credit system; none of his goods were purchased at nine, or six, or four months, or at ninety, or sixty, or thirty days; he never gave his note to the itinerant clan of merchants from whom he purchased; no—he bought for cash and sold for cash. He didn't understand the machinery of a bank, nor the workers and wire-pulling officers of these paper-mills, that seem to grind all the year around in order that the three chief millers who superintend them may get fat on the profits of the windy affair. Despising all such "monopoliers," as Tom Scrape called them, with more truth than orthographical respect, Mr. McNoddy, in his own words, "sould for cash to toorn an honist pinny." His counting-house was a subterranean apartment, which we have before stated the envious and malignant world calls "a junk-shop." It was filled with merchandise, that is, merchandise in fragments of every shape the scholar can range with the scientific tables on a common table. The floor of the commercing sanctuary was paved with spikes, and nails, and blades of axes, and hammers, and tools, all in jackets of rust fitted by Mr. Oxide—who is the scaly partner of the clerk of the weather—and in certain boxes were contained articles known to have been stolen, and only exhibited to the eye of a customer well acquainted with the reputable proprietor of the under-ground warehouse.

Pimpy had been suspected, and certain officers had searched his premises, and he was once in that measure of troube called "a peck"—perhaps because conscience at such a time is pecking the sinner—but his vast political influence saved him as it had many worse men. He was not naturalized, but that was no impediment to his course of profit; the election was the grand theatre where his influence always had effect, and in his good suit of clothes he always looked honest at an election, where, if he did not operate "above board," he did above ground. The owner and conductor of such a cellar, which seemed the very focus of every kind of metallic rays, could hardly be suspected of having a parlor furnished like that wherein

Miss Angelica Seiser and Mrs. McNoddy had had a passage of—not arms, but—tongues. Yet so it was—the parlor was well furnished, and Mrs. McNoddy could dress in silk, and actually order a new spring hat from the bow window and show window of Miss Whortelberry and Company.

Mr. McNoddy had served the king, and got for such service many small rewards, such as cash and lash, but very little of the king's English, as might be discovered by his small talk. He was kind to his wife; sometimes went to church; but some badly disposed persons said that his lady could always get shrived better than he by a licensed confessor.

Mr. and Mrs. Pimpy McNoddy walked in among the Seisers, and took seats proffered for their acceptance, and the usual quantity of "good evens" were exchanged—for there is a form of politeness in every grade in society, from the unlearned to the over-learned in etiquette: the former conforming more to the satisfactory mark, and the latter overburdening civility with artificial incumbrances.

Now what, thought the Captain, can be the object of this meeting; hostilities, perhaps war, even to the sharpness of the tongue; must we hang the banner on the outward wall, or play a medley on the pipes of peace?

The Captain gazed on Pimpy McNoddy, who had been a sergeant in the walking regiment of the King of England, defender of his own faith, but not of McNoddy's; and the latter cast a glance on the Captain, who had been somebody higher in grade than a sergeant, and fought for the same king, in hot and cold climates, in a far distant land. They exchanged nods, and Mrs. McNoddy looked at the three Seisers, and on Madam La Pump, and the latter returned the look four-fold, they being four to one. The two small Seisers snored at all the company from the surface of the rag carpet, and the lap-dog was in the soundness of a sleep superinduced by the warmth of animal heat and indolence; and at this time the good evens had ceased, and a silence reigned in the leasehold home of the Seisers.

It has been said a thousand times by tongues, and has been written by pens, and printed by types, that a calm precedes a storm—silence a tempest—the mute look of a begger, foreshadows his voice—the silent shake of a dog's tail, his regular bark of hunger—the noiseless shoot of flame and roll of the cloud, the thunder of their household. It must be so—and is so.

The first to break the awful state of suspense, at the time here alluded to, wherein all parties were mute—the first that uttered a preliminary sentence according to courtesy, not usuage; for at home the relative situation of Mr. and Mrs. Mc would have been changed—was Pimpy McNoddy: for be it understood that the right of parties in lawful wedlock are such as in this case—Mr. and Mrs. Mc not being at home, to invest and consolidate in Mr. McNoddy the husband all the liberties of speech severally appertaining to him and his wife.

Pimpy spoke not in a firery tone of anger—not with rude and boisterous notes—no; but with the cool sentiments of a negotiator in metallic substances, including Klauberg's metallic razors straps. He commenced—he made a beginning—but it was a very short one; and he only uttered the words, "Mistress Seiser"—when a singular knock at the door seemed to indicate a knocker, either metal or flesh and blood, the latter being the knuckle-knockers, portable and always in hand.

The door was opened, and the company instantly honored with the appearance of Mr. and Mrs. Slapnumbers: he a man's mercer, a cutter and maker of clothes, known as a fashionable tailor in the neighborhood; and she the wife of that happy tailor only two weeks married to him, and consequently but in the first quarter of the honey moon—a moon, by the way, that seldom appears but once in a lifetime, and therein is not to be compared with the moon that comes once a month, and never says anything, and never, like that moon called honey, ceases to shine—forever.

How very inopportune this same visit, and yet what a conservative visit after all! Instead of Mr. McNoddy bearing down with all his banners in relation to the quarrel between the Angel and his wife, the latter having insinuated that she was a fallen Angel—instead of delivering himself with just and eloquent indignation softened by charity, as he had prepared himself to do—there was a pause—he ceased—it would not do before strangers to start his guns, throw in his forces and charge—no.

Here were two people, who being recently married, could not have nerves to listen to the roar of battle; they had a flow of spirits sufficient to arrest any discourse, and turn its prominent import from sour to sweet. They did so—with the charity of the newly married.

How fatal!—there were the belligerents, the Angel, and Mrs. McNoddy: the latter had said that the former was no better than she should be—an abstract truth; but then the tone and manner in which it was whispered, the color that seemed to have been given to it—there was the bitter rub.

Miss Angelica had visited the said Mrs. McNoddy, and lectured her almost into a fainting fit, until her hand trembled so as to quench a two-penny mould while endeavoring to snuff that candle. What power in the frown of an Angel!

Mr. McNoddy had emerged from the avenues of his subterranean counting-house, shaved himself with a dull razor, dressed himself in his best, and accompanied the fair Mrs. McNoddy, his wife and household goddess, down to the house of the Seisers, either to widen the breach already made, or to close it as completely as could be done by adhesive plaster. What a husband—father—negociator! and in his first effort to do this, it may be said in his exordium, and even in the beginning of that exordium, he was arrested—not by a sheriff, but—by a tailor; not held to bail, but to silence, by a new married couple. Unhappy McNoddy!

After Pimpy ceased speaking, and the new married couple were fairly in the room, as if to put McNoddy clean out of the combat, every body rose and shook the newly married by the hands, and very affectionately made inquiries about health, and every thing relating to their position in society, and the vast budget of things talked of on such occasions.

The appearance of this recently wedded couple seemed to operate like the spirit of a new dream on all the company except Pimpy and his lady—they remained silent, very severe in features, and felt almost like intruders, as it was plain that if war must be had, that night at least the forces could not be put in motion, so as to accomplish the object they had in view.

How strange things appear—how light is each thought—how brilliant the colors of the musing fancy—how swift and rapid the manifold dreams—how predisposed the smiles to crowd upon the coloring cheek—when the heart is in the first unalloyed circle of happiness realized, after the promises of years—and when the bridal crown has placed its unfelt burden on the throbbing temples! But how all things alter with after time, and how the lightness of fancy, and the colors of the rose, and the dreams of hours, and the whispers of unlingering music, all lose themselves in the cooler staidness of every-day life—when the cap and not the crown is on the temples—when the rose of health and not the bride's is on the features, and the second sober thought of woman, and not the changeful whim of the newly-wedded, lingers in the mind! and so it was with the two visiters. The former state belonging to Mrs. Slapnumbers, with her smiles, and panting breath, and overjoyed heart—and the latter to Mrs. McNoddy, who sat the picture of sober serenity, whose honey-moon had slid down the horizon so long ago, as almost to be unremembered, and not even mentioned in the almanac of her wedding year.

Mr. McNoddy came prepared for a long argument, and his wife could supply notes to any amount; and now, alas! he could not cross the Rubicon. The tide did not serve the modern Roman, and he and his lady were constrained to retreat without an attack; to leave the field unfought, and delay the outpouring of their swelling griefs. They made their bows to the company, promised to renew their visit, and left the new married couple in possession of the family.

At this juncture the hairy head of Mr. Crisp was thrust into the door, to inform the Captain that on the ensuing evening the meeting of the clammers and other fishers would be held preparatory to the struggle to elect an Alderman of a section, and to solicit the Captain's company thither, to hear the proceedings. The Captain assented, and Sam retreated.

The happy Mr. Slapnumbers and his laughing lady, as a matter of yielded courtesy, monopolized two-thirds of the conversation, and the others were not displeased; for Mrs. Slapnumbers was so playful, and so smiling, and purposely wrong-headed, that she slapped her lord in the garment line on the shoulder, and pulled his hair—all so mischievously, it was really astonishing—and made every one laugh; and then she made him sing. To this he made no objection, for he was formerly a member of the Thunderdrum Club, whose meetings were long remembered in the neighborhood where they had met, on account of the roaring chorus, sung by the members several times each evening, which awakened a score of sleepy mothers and three score of sleepy infants, who forthwith joined the Club in the deafening chorus aforesaid.

They left the house, after the termination of the song of Mr. Slapnumbers, in characteristic glee; and then Madame La Pump took the pug under her arm and went home. The first thing that engaged the attention of the little French lady, was the choice supper intended for the lap-dog. Warm milk, and soft bread, and sometimes stewed beef, made up the diet of the lucky little fellow; and then he frequently had his "extras," and devoured them like a gourmand. All the time pug was consuming his rations, his mistress was seated near, as much pleased to see him eat as if she were fulfilling a command of law and the laws of her own heart. When the little chap had finished his mess, he would receive a long lesson in the French tongue, on behavior, and diet, and cleanliness, and other peculiar points pertinent to "dog" teachers being old ladies, and perhaps the lady abbess of some modern nunnery, who keeps speaking-parrots and the like. Then the little Madam would comb out the white hair of the pug, and wash his hide, and bathe him in a tub, all the during time, too, giving him a lecture superior to the balderdash of Chesterfield, and with a strictness and manner as earnest as if she were administering to him

section after section the whole moral law.—Frequently he would growl at the rubbing of the coarse towel, and then her white finger would threaten him into silence; then, when dried, and combed, and sufficiently lectured, the canine beauty would be put in lodgings with almost as much care as two-legged little figures are extended in a mahogany crib, tucked up with the covering, with his head on a pillow and his little tail curled up to resemble a silver eel in the quiet of circular repose. Nor is it strange that the affections should cling to the domiciled dog in the absence of a more gifted being who might entertain with smiles and controversy. If that dog had had the power to converse in the French tongue, and could have carried on a course of quarrel with his mistress, who could have estimated his value? As it was, she talked for both, and deemed him in opposition to her argument—and that seemed quite as satisfactory; and being a glib conversationalist, did she not prefer it so?

CHAPTER V.

An Indignation Meeting of Allied Sovereigns.

Patriotism is the cheapest article in the markets of mankind. During a long series of years, Patriotism modestly meant an uninterested spirit to serve the country; but modern men have modernized it, and now it is entitled to the sacred and elevated purity of Demagogueism! If there be a solitary Christian, who chaunts his worship in the pens of partizanship, who will deny this fact, we can convince him by quotations commencing in the ancient text of Hudibras, contained in the writings of the Revolutionary penmen; and plainly to be gleaned from the sublime philosophy of Salmagundi and the macaroni of De Tocqueville. Patriotism may now be said to mean, any one's rant and roar; who, with vociferous declamation and beastly bearing, exhibits a determination to serve the country, for the purpose of filling his own large purse, or the larger one of his friends. Love of country, and love of that country's gold and silver, may, by mere chance, be combined in an honest man—and then the two passions are not dangerous in their possessor; but when they meet in a mere partizan, their possession enables him to stand forth a hungry pimp, in whose hands the country is safe; but the country's money—never! Shylock wept over the broken condition of his bond; the sons of the largest freedom have exceeded the creation of Shakspeare's genius; and have smiled, with honest lips, to see the departure of a defaulter, who did not leave even a broken bond to be wept over!!

How often was it seen that patriotic fathers, elected to keep an economical eye and supervision over the sub-divided sections of the city, obtained places and offices for all their relatives and political friends; and were frequently seen taking a glass of Cogniac and burning a royal segar, in the great Wigwam of the Council; and getting merry, too, at the expense of the country; and moreover, at certain times, supping—not on long clams nor Rockaway—but upon York-bay oysters, fresh as a flood tide, large as the giant hand of the collector of taxes, and as fat as the city's treasury! Can any one deny that such fathers as these possessed genuine modern patriotism? No! the lecturer who would stand up and dare to deny that such men had a redundancy of patriotism as above described, would also impudently deny, that these modern noblemen had often put their friends in the public crib; and that one of the municipal doges had been appointed governor of the stone poor-house, as a reward for the faithful manner in which he had consumed the refreshments of his fellow-citizens, and drank the pure liquor of his sovereigns—and all with an ease, and grace, and dignified manner beautiful to behold, until the cash charges appeared on the mile-long list of the controller; when it must be confessed that the beauty lessened before the gathering frowns of a tax-payer, who gazed with an eagle eye on the enormous sum total, and swore that the city's treasury was a bed of blue-point oysters, where patriots could sleep, and fatten while they slept!

Notwithstanding the well-known and elevated patriotism of such pure and hungry fathers, they swam along, like golden fish, in the cheering municipal tide, without much grumbling on the part of the noisy constituency; until, by some unwise movement in the open chamber of debate, an individual father, having eaten too much, or drank too much—we mean Tea!—happened to affront some portion of his electors. Whenever such a thing occurred, the city father became instanter a marked legislator—a municipal victim—a ward renegade—a sectional monster—who must be ejected from his beautiful seat of easy honors, and cast down in the frowning ranks of his insulted supporters. Such things frequently happened in a city, where combinations of indignant individuals could be brought to bear, with a Roman front and a modern broadside, in favor of a favorite, or to aid in the deposition of a degenerate dignitary.

A case of this kind had recently occurred. The amiable and kind-hearted Alderman of the 29th Section, in which the great mass of the fishers and clammers resided, had, with an utter want of policy, actually endeavored for the repeal of a law which gave the shell-

fish dealers the privilege of selling fish on a Sunday morning. At first, it was not believed, by those who would suffer by such an interdict; but soon the entire body and legion of the clammers learned the awful fact. Then rose up the roar of Vesuvius from living craters—the groans of the shell army—the moans of the muscle-men—the indignation of the million; and then the war-cry was sounded, through brass trumpets, and tin horns, and marine shells, and throats whose tones were terrible; and they were heard from east to west, wherever the sun lit the stand or store, the stud or stable of clam, oyster, crab, or eel giants. The whole body of hardy venders was shattered and stunned, as if by a stroke of corporation lightning—a double dash of municipal thunder. The immemorial custom—nay! how it cuts the historian's heart to tell this truth—the legal, the statute privilege, was about to be wrested from them—not by a strange hand—no! spirit of the great Shark, listen!—but by their own Alderman, their own Sectional Father, co-patriot and local Roman—and one, too, who had enjoyed the public segars, and oysters, and soup, turtle and terrapin, and ten-shilling tea, and Mocha coffee, and Cogniac, and, moreover, yes! body of the bacchanalian gods! even —— champagne!

Spirit of the slippery eel, of the spotted trout, of the striped bass, of the juicy clam, of the matrimonial oyster! where, we ask, where was the ponderous clammer, the Spartan hero, who cried "oysters;" the Colonels who vended shad, the Captains who caught at crabs, with soul so dead as to submit to the 29th part of a soulless body?

We weep over the fault of that poor City Father, and all the fishers join us in the "cry"!

Roused by a movement of that kind which would, if successful, have lessened the profits of the fish-venders, by denying to them an open market on Sunday mornings, the whole profession had determined to meet together, in order to baffle, if possible, a scheme which might injure that tender and jealous article called self-interest. The meeting was called to concert plans, and resolve on measures to depose the recreant spirit who had dared to interfere with the franchise of the scalers; and the place designated for the congress of the allied sovereigns was the second floor of the house tenanted on the first floor by Rollem and Gum, retail grocers. As the time for convening approached, Mr. Crisp, Tom Scrape, and sundry other learned members of the profession, were seen moving through the moonlight towards the place of rendevouz, the Captain bringing up the rear of the company of fishers. Every body, friend or acquaintance, boy, block-head and booby, were invited to join in the crusade against the enemy; and the company was expected to be very large, of sifted respectability, and of indomitable spirit—for when sovereigns find that their prerogatives are in danger, the subject sinks deep, and woe be to the adversary when royal spirits are fired with indignation, and clan together in defence of bread and butter.

Among the company traveling with the Water Dog, were two characters belonging to dissimilar classes in that section of the city: one of them, Sandy Bungspunger, was the keeper of a hotel, which some plain republicans called a grog-hole, and which was a wooden tenement of three stories, near the point the popular voice entitled "The Hook." Sandy was an Englishman, and was once a well-dressed horse-jockey, but grog and gambling brought him down—if it be possible for a jockey to sink—to the well-known habits of an individual whose fingers are said to be "light." He was a proculator of recruits for the army in his native country, and gained many an honest guinea by deceiving the medical inspector, in bringing forward a choice figure for the ranks, who soon found good treatment in the hospital, while Sandy pocketed his fee, and subsequently shared with the sick recruit the bounty money, both laughing in the happiest manner at the blessed King and that King's Doctor of Medicine. Afterwards, however, the dexterity of Sandy's fingers attracted the attentions of certain persons in authority, and then it became obvious to Mr. Bungspunger that the air of his native land disagreed with him; that the spot was not a suitable place for the display of his peculiar talents, and that emigration would be a beneficial thing. Like hundreds of his liberal fellow-performers, he crossed the Atlantic, and landed in a country whose inhabitants he thought might want a few lessons as to the mode and manner of enjoying freedom to the utmost extent. Although in poverty and in disgrace, his prejudices, when he first came, induced him to look with disgust upon every thing he saw; and when he stood with large swollen cheeks, and abundant whiskers as black as soot, and only a guinea in his pockets, he felt as if he were honoring a new world with his presence, and talents, and lofty spirit. Sandy rose from bar-tender to principal of the groggery, and becoming a great partizan in the political arena, he received, without hesitation, from the benevolent authorities of the city, a license to poison any number of customers who could pay for diluted juices. At his bar Mr. Scrape was frequently to be seen; and more frequently another figure, who now accompanied the party, belonging to another class of subjects who moved in that vicinity, and whose home, it may be said with truth, was the length and breadth of the wide world. His name was Bartholomew Santè, which, by transposition

and abbreviation, had been narrowed down to St. Barts, to suit the singular whims of familiarity, which invariably confers a nominal abridgment upon all who get within the reach of its curtailing voice. St. Barts, who was a modern partizan, was a contented and happy man, although his station was on the lowest peg of poverty; and he seemed to be one of the few philosophical beggers in this world, who always having been familiar with want, appear to disregard the pinchings of hunger or the coldness of exposure, and whose sole charm is that which destroys their vitals—liquor. With a part of a segar in his mouth, which, with hundreds of the same kind, he picked up at the doors of hotels, he regaled himself by lying on a log in the sun, and while puffing the Spanish razee, as he termed the pieces of tobacco, he deemed himself happy; if any circumstance threw in his way sufficient money to purchase a glass of gin he was happier, and when an ordinary meal of victuals passed his palate, he was happiest; and if two of these circumstances formed a conjunction conjunctive, he reveled in the region of superlative upon superlative—most happiest. He was never known to wear any thing new; all his habiliments ranging under the respective heads, in the merchant's scale, of "ragged," "rent" or "rusty"—which fact, as he often told others when in a merry-mood, saved him the disagreeable necessity of throwing any thing in Abraham's bosom—meaning thereby that he never pawned any thing with Abraham, the Jew broker.

Whether he ever wore that very useful and universal companion of a man's shoulders and arms, so often abused in the tough fingers of a washerwoman, cannot be told; for St. Barts, like some modern figures, might be examined at any time during the roll of the sun, and never exhibit a particle of linen or cotton, white, yellow, or dun.

The party, followed by the Captain at a respectable distance, and lit by her quiet majesty in Heaven, who may be, without hyperbole, addressed "Highness," and who is the only Queen that will be suffered to preside over the land of the "colonizing" braves, went on through the crooked streets, until a halt was made at the door of Rollem and Gum. A few of the party entered the grocery for some of the derivatives from corn, and rye, and apples, where the whole list of the diluted bodies of certain spirits could be had, with the names given by the learned in the distiller's encyclopedia, and which had the fabled reputation of imparting courage to the imbibers, and thereby enable them to act their parts in the second story, where they would be required to stand to their guns and shells, in defence of their rights—which was very likely to be the case, as there was no opposition dreamed of. All the distinguished exclaimers proceeded to the room, the Captain taking his position near the "cheerman's cheer," where a few of the highly polished, and cleanest-robed, and recently washed figures had congregated, in order to put a clean face upon the matter, as that was the head of the room. The Water Dog's party filed in on the benches and unoccupied seats; each man and boy, grandsire and runt with chip hat or tarpaulin, and with heavy water boots, the noise of which, when applause was stamped on the proceedings, would, it was supposed, reach the house of the recreant Alderman, and strike terror to his heart, although of the texture of the stubborn heart of a hard clam; and even make the materials of which his building was composed tremble before the indignation of a meeting, called to denounce the scaly Father of a city whose taste bore freely on the slaughtered bass.

The large room was freely supplied with benches, but the independent auditory, as is usual with the aspiring bloods of the political circle, chose to stand on the seats, and each endeavored to thrust his head over that of his neighbor, or between the arm and body of a frontier man, or lean with his huge paws on the shoulder of another. Sometimes a head would suddenly rise over a shoulder, and expectorate on a form in the third advanced rank, and leave a mark upon the habit of the happy owner; and at other times a heavy hand would fall rapidly on the tarpaulin of some small chap, who, disregarding the pain and dicomfiture that followed, laughed and enjoyed the free demonstration, and deemed it the ebulition of patriotic gentility. It was a happy feature in the characteristic manners of the mass, that a coat might be torn, or a jacket severed, or even a pair of trousers torn by a sudden rent, without eliciting much grumbling; but whenever one of the very few white shirts in the company suffered in collar or tail, then rose the bile of the unlucky owner. The president and vice-chairmen, and secretaries were seated on a raised platform at the head of the room—the former was a man very red in the face, with a white neck-cloth and a black coat buttoned to the throat, and he represented the shad-fishers. He owned part of a sloop and boat, several cars and stands, and had the reputation of knowing much more than a modern Alderman. The first vice-chairman was in the long eel and flounder line, and incidentally a dealer in sheeps-head and oddities. The second vice was in the oyster and muscle line, wholesale and retail, and appeared to have fed on his own stock; as he had neither stock nor handkerchief on his neck. One of the secretaries was known as the most skilful catcher of crabs in the city, who knew every inch of ground in Newtown and Bushwick creeks, Red mills and Hurlgate, and other

well-known crab-walks; and the other secretary was a dealer of reputation in those red and green monsters known as lobsters, who suffer themselves on the muddy bottom to be trapped by lifeless porgies. Here was a distribution of exalted honors commendable, and made among every branch of the profession; each was represented; and six fiercely burning tallow three-pennies lit the proud and posted representatives, and exhibited their powerful forms and sun-touched noses to the strained eyes of the constituency. The President, charged with a small glass of courage from the private bottle of Rollem—the senior of Rollem & Gum—rose with dignity, and stood dignified, gratified, delighted—and as a presider should do. He gazed three minutes all around the assembly in perfect silence, and with a gravity altogether unparalleled—you could have heard a repeater tick, if one had been present, from Abraham's bosom. There were many there that went upon tick—but they were Peters, not repeaters. The President raised his right red hand until it reached the longitude of his double chin, and with the grave countenance of a judge in the whiskey-market, uttered the flattering and unctuous word, "Gentlemen." For men to make a discovery was something—but to make a discovery that they themselves were gentlemen, was still more glorious; and to have that same discovery made by their own President, seemed glory enough for one night. They acknowledged the receipt of that discovery with six sonorous cheers. The moment the word "gentlemen" was pronounced by the President, a loud laugh burst from Sandy Bungspunger, who was looking St. Barts full in his face. The idea that St. Barts, under any, even political circumstances, could be called a gentleman, wrought upon Sandy so forcibly, that he had to laugh—'twas irresistible.

"Vy, vots in your head now, landlord?" said St. Barts.

"Nothing, St.—there was one word, but it wouldn't stay," answered Bungspunger—"it was impossibil."

"Silence!" cried a long man in the crab-line, as if he were pouncing on a soft shelled crab.

"Take 'im out," said a little fellow, who couldn't see the President, and was determined to hear him—and be heard.

"Put 'im out," cried a half dozen voices, that appeared in corners half smothered, and that were uttered by little porgy-venders, who averaged four feet high.

"Roll 'im out!" shouted another man, who was wedged in between a clam giant and an amateur, whose body was two feet in diameter; and the small of whose back was being bored by the chin of a small boy, who was also stirless in the solid mass.

Silence, however, was restored, after Mr. Crisp had advised the little porgy-men, whom he couldn't see, not to bark at a dog. The President again spake—

"Gentlemen, we've met together to defend our rights, and your rights, and other rights—and it makes no diff'rence how you are, when you are, what time you are, whether you are or are not—"

This was altogether unintelligible without a context; but notwithstanding the lucid and roaring mass shouted three loud and long cheers—for what?

The speaker continued:

"Employed—in clam-ranks—oyster-lines—shad-roads or eel-spearing—you must stand up as I see you now, determined never to be put down or swept out of the market—even for three hours—on a Sundee mornin'. No! and we must put that crazy Aldermin down—and keep 'im where he can't feed gratis—when hungry—nor drink, at your expense, when dry—which is always."

Here a hundred throats of savage dimensions cried, "out with him!" in the combined bass notes of broken church organs; and the boots of the assemblage were heard in continuous and redoubled thumps from cow and horse-hide, till the very house seemed to be begging for mercy in a tornado.

"Yes, my clam-lads," continued the speaker, getting warm with the internal patriotism from Rollem's bottle, "we must put 'im down, or go down ourselves—and then hear 'the better day the better deed,' grumbled by authority—Gentlemen! do I appeal to you in vain?"

These sentiments were answered by "ayes," which should have been "nays;" and just as the boot operation commenced, the Secretary informed the meeting that if they continued to stamp, the whole of the crockery of the firm below would be dislodged from the shelves, and the strings of pots, cups, jugs, mugs and hollow-ware were in danger of falling, not in price, but bodily, and thereby get a cracked character; and he requested the assembled sovereigns not to use their understandings except in receiving instruction, and confine themselves to a verbal demonstration of their assent.

The speaker, who had taken an additional drop from the private bottle of Rollem, continued:

"Gentlemen,—the ballot-box—which you know is a green box that sometimes contains whims and notions, and the scattering gas of—however, I say nothing of "colonizers;"—that box must crush one who would cut up our fish with the cleaver of the law, and drive us out of the market on a Sundee mornin'. Why don't he stop the colored nuisances from dancing for eels? would it interfere with family cognates? Why don't he stop

the grog-holes, and the gangs of naked loafers from soiling the river water, by a Sundee plunge? No! he must spear us. One would suppose you had sold him clams in a consumption—fish that wanted a bath in cologne water, or had given him water snakes for lampreys, porgies for bass, or Newark bays for York bankers. He must be put down, fellow-indignants—he don't understand the moral constitution of civil liberty, that's fed by a clam-bed, and made generous by a bushel of patriotic oysters."

Now came the shouts that mocked the great Jove and his echoing household, and "down with him!" sprung from the deep wells of internal sounds—and then was heard clapping of hard hands, and other deafening noises, evidencing exact coincidence of thoughts in the speaker and the heavy miscellaneous auditory, who was doing a double and very agreeable duty, viz: endeavoring to eject an Alderman from the lips of public patronage, and the saliva from their own.

The patriotic world is filled with an unlimited number of shining speakers, and preachers, and teachers, who perform on stools, and stages, and benches, and stumps, in all the various dens and holes where their voices can be heard, to instruct their congregated followers how to think, and speak, and vote—whom to slander, and how to clap hands, and when to throw up caps, as if each charmed listener were in danger of perdition, provided he remained mild, quiet, and decent—and each of these peculiar roarers has his own comical modes of action, when he arrives at that peculiar crisis in his verbality wherein his heart may be said to float in whisky, his spirit to boil in the clarified essence of modern eloquence; his common sense to be in a misty cloud, and all other senses to be whirled round in the froth of his own melo-dramatical harangue. When such an elevated animal is in the furious tide of his rhapsody, he imitates the elegance of a common clown, for love of his country; twists his body with a posturer's activity, for that country's money; rolls his distended eyes, for that country's glory; starts like a tragetic buffoon, for that country's salvation; snaps his pocket-handkerchief, in defiance of that country's enemy; and claps his hands, and thumps his bony fist, and perspires in a manner wonderful to behold, when we reflect that a learned writer in the "Bedlamite Quarterly" did represent that all these dancing and shouting debaters were not exactly polical tigers, famous for a roar, but had a slight touch of what the world calls Christian manhood.

The President of our meeting, who was the sole self-raised orator of the fish-league, could not boast of one half of the bouncing mummeries that grace the stump candidate or the spouter on the evening stools; but he was truly original, and very happy in his utterance, actions, stops, pauses, looks, kicks, and the classic protuberation of his elegant lips. A careful observer might detect the President, at short intervals, throwing his mammoth quid of tobacco from the right jaw to the left, and after a pause, back would fly the lump from left to right; and so palpable was that done, that a lobsterman shook his head, and suspected the speaker of having borrowed the stone that fostered the eloquence of Demosthenes. Then he would start like tragedy men, and draw his big jack-knife, open and flourish it as if he had a shad by the nose, and had sworn to split it on the altar of a fisher's glory—then, again, he would seize his Madras pocket-handkerchief, and snap it fiercely, and as if he were aiming at a felonious gally-worm that threatened to bore him on his sanguinary bump; and then, throwing up his coat tail with rapid gesture, and looking like Macbeth after an absconding dagger, he would thump the table with a solitary rap, vibrating the running tallow of the soft three-pennies, and almost quenching the burning beauty of those unscented and noble lights—and after that single stroke, his eyes would be cast in the centre of the room, and he remain another Cicero of a bad age demolishing a modern Roman.

"No, fellow-citersins—your enemy dosn't understand the moral constitution of a fisher, who, like others in this political markit, ought to buy and sell even on a Sundee mornin'. Didn't our forefathers do 't—too be sure—our forefathers fought for the privilige—and shill we surrender 'em to the 29 th part of"—

The President's huge hand falling as he uttered the last word, the latter was lost in the noise of the tremendous stroke. Up flew his coat tail, and his eyes were rivetted on the gazing mass—while three cheers were given to the orator by some of the audience for ascertaining that they had forefathers who were known; and not only so, but forefathers who had fought for privileges: a thing so new to the descendants of those same forefathers, that it shook the former into loud huzzas—a thing they had never dreamed of—never had seen illustrated on paper or canvas; and, in fact, a thing that never had been whispered in the remote tones of descending tradition. How much heart-burning is necessarily endured by the suffering orphans in political ranks, by reason of their utter want of knowledge of their parent tree! Only think how tough it must be to one of the dignified in the political ranks, whose whole heart is too small to contain his love of country, and his uplifted ambition to make that country worthy of his adopted self—whose whole soul is struggling by night and by day in devising ways and means how to remunerate himself out of the purse of that chosen country's

pocket! How tough for such an one, while walking over the orchards of the world, to be necessitated to whisper, "that is my family tree—I'm a peach—no; an apple—no; a plum—no; a cherry—no; an acorn—no—none—I do wonder where my father vegetated—"any how!"

The speaker wiped his face with his handkerchief—by this time grown redder, and somewhat like the burning portrait of the declining sun—and then took a fresh quid from the elegant vegetable of Virginian growth. He looked around the assembly, with the well-drilled eye of a thrice-elected Alderman, eager to detect upon the people's table an inch of toast and an ounce of impaled salmon. There was wisdom in that look,—so thought his hearers; and importance—so he thought himself; and furthermore, he felt his own fame swelling in his own bosom, and not only there, but in the sun-browned breasts of his hearers, who stared at him with eyes open, white and large, each of which a modern conchologist would certify resembled the snowy figure of a fancy clam. In fact, he never felt so happy in all his born days. There were all his granite friends, standing like stone guards, as if to warn all competitors from their peculiar fishing-grounds; and in the enduring joy of his heart, he commenced dreaming how easy it would be for him, did he reside in that section where fish even brightened from decomposition—but fishermen, never—to be elected Alderman—yes, a father of the city, a sitter in the notorious criminal court—at four dollars per diem, all in current money, demandable even in gold; a mover in the Great Hall, as co-owner, joint-parcener; and having the advantage of possession, puffing all sorts and sizes of glorious segars, and sipping the most pure brandy that ever was set at liberty by the lock and key of the robbed custom-house, and indulging in the finest turtle soup that ever floated in the rotundity of a large bowl; a magistrate who might order an unfortunate begger into bridewell with a stern brow, and escape the suspicion that he was acting the part of a brute in authority—and, perhaps, who could tell?—recollect, ye doubters and libellers of a day dream; recollect Whittington and his tom-cat—who knows? fortune is fortune, and more; it is a duplex homo—'tis an Alderman—even so, he might be Mayor—Mayor of Gotham, with its brick, and stone, and pine board and twelve-penny nails—stuck and driven together to make piles where the heart of the great Mayor might beat with ambition—Mayor of that city where every partizan warmed his fingers, shod his shoeless self, wigged his bald head, and clothed his ulcered body, and satisfied his wolfish appetite at the expense of the tax-payer—Mayor of that city, with its sun-lit bays, within which even the shade of a York-bay oyster lingers not; with its ample rivers washing the wooden sides, and with a treasury open to the finger of every political shark—Mayor, with four thousand dollars per annum, payable without discount, without default, and in smiles that play on the metallic faces of the children of the mint—Mayor of Gotham, where the man of genius had respired the air of authority; where an ignoramus had wondered at the ennobling power of politics; where a sail-maker had endeavored to be a gentleman, and a lawyer had been such without an endeavor—Mayor of great Gotham, the ancient island of Manahatta, with its swelling thousands, continually improving in every crime the willing laws of an old world let slip upon the wings of the racing wind—Mayor—why not?—had not a barber been a Father and a broker his Assistant? twin shavers of the sconce of the public, whose yield is gold—and why not the splitter up of the fresh young shad—the decapitator of an elegant bass—reach the Mayor's chair? and his staff—and his kingdom—and the silvery beauty of that Mayor's salary?

How fine is a day dream!—finer than a flower in bloom, the sun-light opening the hum of a bee—the south winding its whispers on the lip of beauty; but finer is that dream on the soft bosom of the human brain, and finest on the heart of a shad-vender—the colors are suspended there in the spirit of beauty; like the deep-dyed spots on a trout, the roses are fair and various in their heavenly hue—not equalled by the fried roses of the shad; and there breathes an air so soft in the rolling notes, an angel seems to wake them; and it is the young angel of ambition—and she beckons the dreamer to a land where the patriot's sun never sets, and political flowers never die—and the partizan porgy is princely and contented in the treasury-bed the elector has smoothed for him.

But, alas! hear it ye, small fry, who float around the meetings of the patriotic sections; ye smelts of every capacity that worm around the political docks, and feed upon the amimalcule, when patrons are seated in the saddle of power, and ride on the gilded roads of the gulled mass! alas, for human nature! just as the president's dream got to the "mayor's salary," be it told, just as his hand was opening as if to be ready to touch the coin—a huge fishmonger, standing near, cried in an audible voice, "Shaddy, my old cock, you do the president well, dignity and all—split me;" and then the large shad-catcher winked at the President, nodded too, and wiped his nose with his coat sleeve—and all seriously. But the poor President! his dream faded with the fatal words, "shaddy, my old cock;" his breath was supended; it seemed as if he were being removed from the front parlor of the palace of a princess in her playful "teasing."

and thrust without remorse into a damp oyster-cellar, where a half dozen black spirits were battering the lips and cutting the hearts of bivalvular beings; it seemed as if the change from a double-heated atmosphere, to the binding coldness of the grave, had come over him—and as a consequence, down went his dream, and all the beauties of its ideal flourish; down went the Mayoralty and the Aldermanalty, and all their salaries—all;—down went the Judgeship, and its pay, and perquisites, and the flowers, and angels of his dream—all went down—like the promises of boyhood's prospective—down—like the rear guard of summer shad—vanished.

At this time several voices cried for the resolutions, which it must be confessed were the production of neither of the presiding dignitaries, but were the purchased efforts of an attorney's clerk, who was summoned to the aid of the committee, and who had lent his brains for a time and a small retainer to produce them. It was a scene of the broadest comedy to witness the efforts of the several and respective committee-men, to throw upon each other the burden of drawing the resolutions—for either to attempt the mental labor, would have been an act of as much presumption as would have been an effort by either to shoulder mount Ætna, and rob its neighboring bay of the ancient ornament.

The chairman had excused himself by pleading a violent shake of his old enemy, the rheumatism; the two vice-chairmen had been wounded by the dull edges of the oyster knives, or other tools handled with dexterity; and the secretaries were exonerated, because of their entire time being consumed by pressing professional duties. All these excuses had been rendered in committee of the whole house, or rather the whole stable—for the committee had, in point of truth, met in a stable to settle the matter to be embodied in their resolves—and after settling upon such, the chairman, a double one, viz: of the said committee and of the meeting—had obtained aid to put the matter in readable shape; and one half of his hearers supposed, of course, that his was the head that produced the fulminating matter that was to blow the recreant incumbent of the great 29th Section out of the water, and out of the sand, and out of the mud, and out of the clam and oyster beds thereunto appertaining. It did not matter, however, who produced the intellectual relish; for at this, as well as at every other political meeting, mouths are always open to receive and throats to pass all that may be offered, putrescent or otherwise; and the constituency are right in swallowing while they can; for the wire-pullers subsequently make it a rule to do their deglutition when the substantial loaves and fishes are made manifest. The resolutions breathed the spirit and meaning of the men for whom they were concocted, and consequently they were passed with acclamations that went up from the premises of Rollem and Gum, long, loud and lion-breathed.

"Gentlemen," said the President, "one word before these resolutions are read." Remember, the cause is your own, your wives', your childrens', and mothers', and grandmothers', heirs' and progenitors'; be active, be vigilant, recollect the price of liberty is eternal huzzaing—leave no clam unturned—no oyster unopened—no lobster unpluged—no crab untied—no porgy uncarred; leave nothing undone that may aid us in this soul glorifying struggle of the enlighted professors of itchyology against the tyrannical innovation of one, gentlemen"—the word 'gentlemen' being complimentary, was always met by three cheers—"I say it as your organ, of one who in a few days will be no more—in office."

Continued cheers followed this peroration, and the clam-boy apprentices in the business, shouted with the hoarse notes which they are used to utter in the streets. The cause was their's as well as their masters'; and as they understood the whole proceedings, they were also as capable of uttering a patriotic growl, and making a noise, as any giant on the clam-roll—making, however, a slight allowance for the diminished areas of the juvenile throats.

The President ceased speaking, wiped his brow several times, shook hands with the officers, and looking round with an eye white and silver-like, and a nose red and decidedly Roman, he smacked his lips like a worshipper of terrapin, as much as to say, "who would have supposed that I could venture so far?"

After some delay and disagreement among the officers as to the person who should read the resolutions, the President was appointed to that office.

The professional gentry, nobility, and heirs of the nobilitated spirits, hearing a pause in the proceedings—that is, hearing "nothing," which is a pause in the clam calendar, though not the political; for this is eternally boiling with a living roar—straggled down into the first story, to refresh the animal organs, as continual shouting will make subjects and sovereigns dry; and there they found divers juices to moisten the dry lips and kindle the eyes.

Mr. Scrape was endeavoring to convince the idle St. Barts that the troubles of oystermen all arose from monopoliars, and eventually it would be so in the ranks of all the fishers; and St. Barts, without understanding a word about the matter, agreed with Tom until the latter paid for two glasses of gin, when the former veered round into the game of dominos, and said he would as lief play with monopoliars as any others, and beat the

whole, too—that is, if they played like gentlemen. The mention of this word forced a simultaneous laugh from Tom and Mr. Crisp, who had joined the party. The laugh brought tears in the eyes of the two friends, and St. Barts turned somewhat pale, and a little anger was visible in his look; but recollecting himself, he, too, indulged in a strain of boisterous mirth, to the manifest surprise of Tom, who stopped necessarily, and to inquire what had touched the music of the Saint. St. Barts was wordless, nor could the Water Dog worm anything more from the former. He was merely counter-laughing, in order not too long to remain the butt of risible satire—the severest satire, because not understood.

A noise on the upper floor, among the enlightened scholars of modern times and principles, brought up the refreshed worthies to hear all that was to be heard from the head and fount of the intelligent presider in the chair.

The President rose up to read the resolutions, but had uttered only a few words, when the wild shriek of a large dog was heard under one of the benches. The monstrous foot of a big clammer had flattened the tail of a poor cur, and in an instant the dog's guardian was on the spot exclaiming, "who licked my dog?" A dozen voices were then heard vociferating, "turn 'im out"—"don't hurt the animals"—"shoo! shoo! shoo!"—"phiz! phiz! phiz!" and sundry elegant imitations of young calves, and old geese, and puppies and pigs, with a long series of brief sentences, such as "cool off, porgy"—"shut your shells, York bay," and "batten your hatches, clammer." At length, after the conciliating voice of St. Barts was heard, uttering in desponding tones, "oh, gentlemen!" a half dozen times—at which the Water Dog and his friend Sam nearly choked with laughter, and at which the Captain had to smile—peace was restored, and the business of the meeting, the reading alluded to, was continued by the presiding shad-splitter:

"Whereas one of the patrons of the strong waters of a certain parlor has endeavored to shut us out of the markets on Sunday morning—Therefore resolved, that he can't do it—but that we can shut him out of the people's parlor."

This resolution found a tongue in every man, and an echo in every boy, who not only cried "aye!" but huzzaed with voices that spoke the combined tone of terrestrial thunder. If the Alderman didn't shake in his shoes—would he ever?

"2nd. Resolved, that the clam interest, the oyster principles, and the scaler's profits, are one and indivisible—tria juncta in una."

This resolution passed with redoubled noise, and shouts that shook Rollem and Gum, their house, their herrings, their groceries and grog; but none understood the three last words—not even the President—not a single soul; and for that very reason it passed with unequalled clamor. And this is always the case—the duller the animal who goes to shout, the thicker the skull of that same animal, the louder is the deafening applause—for what?

It matters not what is uttered—Latin, Greek, Syriac, or English, in a political meeting, is swallowed, but not digested, although in all cases cut and dried. How easy are the simple led by the nose! and by whom? others as simple, who are themselves led—and by whom? others—we mean simple coin.

One of the Spartan boys, with a dirty face, went below to ask for a glass of gin and water for the "cheerman," and in the meantime business was suspended.

"What do they mean by 'try Johnny unum?'" said Mr. Scrape to the astonished Mr. Bungspunger.

"Vy, some Johnny that's been stealing an oyster-boat—I've no doubt on't," answered Bungspunger.

"All rong," said St. Barts, shaking his big head—"it's Hebrew, and means three eyes in one porgy."

"Who ever haird of that?" said Mr. Crisp, eyeing St. Barts, whose countenance was free from a risible flaw. "I'll ax the Captin," continued Sam—and he did, and returned to report.

"And vot sis the Captain?" asked Mr. Sante.

"He says it's a religious thing," responded Sam—"gin, whisky and Jamaica, in one Saint."

St. Barts turned to the right about, for fear of hearing more, and the loud laugh that shook Bungspunger, sounded like the husky voice of a pepper mill.

"Order" being called by the vice-chairman, the President, who had swallowed a pint of gin and water at a single draught, continued:

"Resolved, that one and all will unite in all 'honorable means' to run out the recreant, and run in a successor, who will uphold the clam-cause and its largest liberty."

This was carried unanimously, of course. The daring spirit "free and independent" enough to object to anything said or sung, shouted or spouted, would have found his portrait variegated by the red and blue of neither oil nor water colors, and himself performing sundry hard feats on the pavement of Rollem and Gum. The President referred now to the next resolution, which he declared contained the heart and hopes of their banded welfare:

"Resolved, that we will yield all our time and use all our means, until the day succeeding the election, to effect our purpose of hurling our enemy from office, and putting one in who will preserve to our profession its pre-

sent legal rights and franchises; and to effect such our purposes, we jointly and severally pledge ourselves, our carts and horses, donkeys and harness, drivers and criers, and finally, 'our sacred honor.' "

This was carried in the deep tones of solemn thunder. 'Twas solemn—to the cause they pledged themselves—without the proviso, "if sober;" they pledged the blood and metal of their stud and stable—they pledged their chief clerks, their whippers-in of bone and blood, their boys, and tellers, and drivers, and vocalists—they pledged their donkeys, whose eyes, like all their fellow-politicians, roll in patriotic frenzy. But more—ay, much more—they, yes, one and all—the ragged, the shirtless and the shoeless of every shade and color, even the non-paying members of the New York Jockey Club—all pledged their "sacred honor"—at all political meetings they do it; and why not clammers and crabbers? Sacred honor! gaze at the list of values in a pawnbroker's shop—and such a pledge will command no coin. Honor! the toothless vender who blew his horn through the streets, and handled tenderly the dying porgy, pledged his honor; the clammer who gave forty "Rockaways" for a half hundred, pledged his honor—the oysterman who coaxed his cargo, with a barrel of water, to keep close lips, pledged his honor; the crier of eels, who, like the classic lady Antonia, wept over the dying lamprey, pledged his honor; itinerants, who fixed the dead eyes of black fish in living semblance, and swore they were too lazy to shine, pledged their honor. Charity! if thou art the daughter of a clam-man, draw his tarpaulin over the memoirs of the professors—and be silent.

The President here announced that the following persons were appointed to act on committees, and would meet the succeeding evening, wherever a majority designated, to fulfil the sacred duties appertaining to the shell struggle:

Clam Cart Committee—Messrs. Blubb, Snuff and Skinner.

Oyster Cart Committee—Messrs. Hug, Hang and Cuttem.

Committee on "Generalising"—Messrs. Scrape, Crisp, McNoddy and Bungspunger.

The last named individuals, residing near each other, were directed to meet the next evening to enter upon their duties, with which they were well acquainted. Some of them, particularly the rag merchant and the rum-seller, having profited largely by sundry strokes of political ledgerdemain, by the aid of which a candidate was enabled to slide in a berth, who subsequently obtained for Bungspunger a license to retail poison, or made it a point to re-license him—and one, too, who could also cover over with his municipal robe the small—though, now and then, rumor whispered, large—moral delinquencies of that close and shrewd bargainer, the quiet tobacco burner, McNoddy.

The history of secret cliques, in a country where the policy of the legal rule admits any and all characters—and many without characters—to land upon the shore, and immediately enter into the polite business of teaching others how to enjoy their own privileges, would furnish some interesting pictures, if the truth could be obtained from the minutes of the several financial committees, which should show the relative value of votes, legal or illegal, at the several periods of their purchase. But let it be a matter of repeated boast that such cannot be remarked of that well-known institution, which has no equal on the known globe—we mean the Seminary of Modern Partizanship. The free school of the Modern Partizan has never had its deserts from the lip of man, or the pen of the philosophical observer—and never will have. It is all in vain to look for justice in the pages of foreign imprint, or from the high source of grateful and gratified bankrupts, who sojourn a month to make a year's observation in a land where, if murder crieth aloud, or the felon's tones are heard, they are recognized as belonging to the fellow-countryman of those same wandering observers from a fast-anchored isle. No! it belongs to ourselves to pay a slight tribute to the school aforesaid. The school of Modern Partizanship is one that never had a parallel from the oldest vote on the shells of the ostracisers, down to the present hour. Composed, as it is, in any and every place, of the brightest characters that ever moved in the circle whose whole area is illuminated with the gems of learning—of gray-beard dolts and juvenile ignoramuses, whose minds are formed to multiply the loud noises of the elegant huzza; whose genius irradiates and spreads beyond all parallel; whose motives are purer than those of the parent stock; whose eloquence outranges the acknowledged beauty of that which has survived the martyred Girondist in his native land; whose acts are more splendid than the language used by themselves to describe them—Behold that school! listen to its lessons! all mindless of self—examine the actions of its shining scholars—and is there a solitary one that elicits aught but a sincere prayer for the speedy apotheosis of the hungry and ragged mass? Who ever detected on the exalted benches of that political assembly the English murderer, admitted to a seat while his fingers retained the scarlet of his fellow's blood? the English burglar, with the keen instincts of his father's practices, called into action by the winning winds of a new world? the European scoundrel, whose thirst the black and stagnant streams of his own home could not quench, and who came over to a land of

promise to keep from starving? none. The eternal purity of the school does not admit them. The high moral stand of its individual characters; the Godlike shouts of its members; the strains of mental harmony that pass their lips; their self-sacrificing evidences elicited after every election; their unanimous disdain of a "loaf;" their aggregated scorn of a "fish;" the patriotic feelings that swell in their bosoms; the undeniable love of country, which is solely theirs; the whispers of their impassioned tones, that outvie the pages of the ancient, and outmeasure his glory; the calm and purified dignity of their personal bearing, and the mild, Christianly traits that forbid the thought of egotistical motive—all, all are evidences of exalted character and unimpeachable position. Not in their scholarly ranks can be seen the English bully; the bold front of the ragged and lacerated gladiator; the foreign freebooter and ignorant emissary, who shot down the blood and being of the soil, and afterwards found apologists in the native cowards reared on that very soil. No! pure in motive; amiable in political bearing; lustrous with intellectual research: beyond comparison in love of home; worshippers at the temple of peace; unmatched in the humility of the patriotic soul; and louder than the leaping thunderbolt in election huzzas—are the scholars of Modern Partizanship. How elevated is such a seat of learning, to administer to aspiring youth the pure elements of political education! What a country, that fosters in its bosom the high and promising spirits of such an institution!

If there be an unfortunate one whose incredulity bars a ready belief in the slight eulogium above offered in behalf of an enduring institution of the political world, let that one peruse the next Chapter, and ascertain the mine of mental lore exhibited by the erudite members of a committee, part of whom were reared on the lucid benches of that same school.

The grand indignation meeting of sovereigns, who could do no wrong, and princes of whales, and other fish of loyal taste, adjourned, after giving nine groans for the marked and predestined Alderman, who was soon to be cast off—politically dead. The groans were given all regular and loud, and sounded as if four battalions of the buried majesties of Denmark had hired the second story of Rollem and Gum to practice lugubrious notes with which to hit the ear of an Alderman, before they could be summoned by the landlord's cock to "clear out."

The great mass separated into units, and some of the latter choice spirits went down into the rummery, to swallow spirits neither choice nor first chop—while the Captain, highly edified by the flouncing of the odd fish, moved towards home, with the sober Mr. Crisp, and followed by Tom Scrape, vexed in heart and in spirit, and growling because no resolution was passed consigning to a certain chamber of warm pretensions all "monopoliars," of all times, ages, climes, names and degrees of "respectability."

CHAPTER VI.

Efforts of intellectual Committee-men—of a shaded lawyer, and of a scientific pair of musical angels.

A committee appointed by the dignified and eloquent President of a Congress of independent Sovereigns, and without a solitary royal tongue dissenting, should have felt proud of the distinction conferred upon them; especially as the elective source was said, in the newspaper entitled the "Flying Fish," to have been "one of the largest, most respectable, and intelligent gatherings, ever convened in the 29th Section; composed as it was of the head and tail, and heart and heel of nature's own noblemen; whose eloquence could wither opposition, and whose lustre would blind the civilized world!"

The particular duties of the committee on "generalizing" were well understood by the celestial specimens of intelligence who had the honor to compose it. It was the duty of this committee to obtain places to lodge a general force of voters, who had the misfortune not to reside in the section; and consequently had a claim upon the conventional sympathies of resident voters whose candidate might want a few hundred volunteers to make his chance of election sure.

It was true formerly, as spoken by a very wise man, that nothing beneath the sun was new; that spirit of wisdom lived too early, and manifestly did not hint at what would transpire, politically, in a new world; and as another wise teacher of ethics of the same persuasion afterwards arose, and declared that "all was fair in politics," it was generally concluded that many useful and new inventions would spring up, under the moon, if not the sun. Indeed one new thing immediately made its appearance among politicans, black, blue, and mixed, in consequence of the prevailing belief, that in politics all is fair; and the innovation alluded to was the system denominated "colonizing," but among religious partizans, "generalizing."

Some curious dramatic scenes were exhibited during the earlier period of the prevalence of the pure system, and a colonizer was often made to shiver for his temerity; but gold will gild a black conscience and warm the figure of a naked patriot, even on a damp night; and this reflection, with a couple of glasses of

whiskey, always sustained the soul of the great partizan—who happened to lose his clothes and find a cowhide embracing his independent back. It has even been ascertained that a party of colonizers, known familiarly by the name of "negroes," who were snoozing in an empty garret, were assailed at midnight with howls and yells, and turned out of their quarters—though it rained, in the opinion of an old lady, "cats and dogs;" and the negro patriots thus dis-engarreted were driven forth, goaded by clubs, and pelted by a storm, that must have been pitiless, to spot the volunteers in their shirtless condition. And we further found it hinted that a large party of blues was imported for an especial occasion, and occupied the loft of a house to the amount of hundreds; and that as if tickled by some enchanted straw, the whole mass during the long night were momentarily, and in concert, scratching with the industry said to be peculiar to the Scotch; and the horror of the sleepless colonizers may be conceived, when it is stated, that the whole gang, instead of marching home to the tune of golden reward, absolutely skipped off, scratching the fingered tune of the Scotch fiddle.

The committee was composed of Mr. Crisp, Mr. Scrape, Mr. Bungspunger, and the ironmonger, Mr. McNoddy, whose learning, unsectional traits, and high respectability, rendered them eligible; and they had met in concert, and in the great counting-house of the latter, to devise plans, discuss measures and settle upon modes of action, that would have a tendency to insure the election of their nominee, by an overwhelming majority.

Yes—blow it through the long horns of the profession! a majority that would speak daggers to tyrants; double-edged swords to Emperors; oyster knives to unholy Monarchs; and exhibit to the unopened eyes of millions, in the old ocean-separated world, the sublime spectacle of an Alderman, thrown from the velvet bottom of his official chair, by a substitute who was placed there by the unbought, unswayed, loud and magnanimous voices of free clammers, equal crabbers, indignant lobsterers, and porgy-venders, whose noses were red—and so would remain while the sun and whiskey were painters by profession. Yes; blow it again through the horns of the people! a majority secured by all those "honorable means" that flow naturally from the actors, whose text is, "all's fair in politics:" a majority brought to light by the spirit and address of men whose pockets being empty, could not offer a metallic bait for electoral fish—as that would be beneath the undiminished dignity of a clam vender, the elevated principles of an oyster crier, and the sacred honor of the whole squad, who offer to the hungry a "stew," a "fry," a "broil," or mess of "raw!"

The committee convened at the well-known period called early canddle-light, when twilight has withdrawn the bold beauty of her fringed and fading drapery, and night is stealing with his dark foot from the eastern region; and when sundry people, who never venture out in the day, are to be seen for business, or profit—and some for both—passing in the living currents of the crowded ways; snuffing the evening air, and ogling the careless portraits of the whiskered tribe.

A committee of politicians, at least one so scholarly and erudite as this, are generally accommodated with a small pine table, stone inkstand, and uncut pinions, a sheet of foolscap, and chairs, new or re-sold, in the same number as there are members; but no such luxuries were seen in the well-filled apartment of McNoddy—no; when the three first named members descended the door-way, that peculiar little man with a pipe, calcining the short cut of P. G. L., was sitting on an old tin kettle, bottom up and bailless, blowing out the puffs of smoke, and in deep thought, gazing upon a pile of old fifty-six pound weights, as if he had been weighed in the scales of elegant society, and been marked "light."

The entrance of three-fourth parts of the committee, induced the smoker to take his pipe from his mouth, shed a sheet of juice, and utter the laconic salutation, "well, you 're hair—jist in time." Each individual looked around the store-room, at the bags of fragments, old rope, and other relatives of the barter family; and when they had satisfied their curiosity, Sam selected a couple of iron weights for his bench, and pointed to other articles, that might be pressed into service by the remaining committee-men, unless they elected to stand. The hairy anglo-American took a bag of oakum and reposed thereon, and Tom settled down upon a block. Here were the committee established in their own quarters, no doubt concocting the well-known original matter that pours in lucid streams from the ambitious skulls of small picaroons in the struggling ranks of special committees.

Each took a segar, and lit it by the flame of the broken glass lamp, and puffed industriously, and in self-defence; or, as Sandy observed, be overclouded with McNoddy's infernal short-cut. Line after line of vapor left the fiery ends of the consumed segars; and cloud after cloud rolled out of the bowl of Pimpy's pipe—while, in the minds of all, the burnished links in the chain of logic were brightened with thoughts, that—be it spoken with sorrow—never found a place in essay or volume: and the reason is, that this committee were thinking philosophers, and philosophical politicians, who concoct and never write; and hence the imperishable beauty of their thoughts, and the clear conclusions of their sifted judgments never could be stolen

even in an age when so many tears are shed for a copy-right-law.

Pimpy McNoddy, as a logician, clung to the stern aristocracy of the classic syllogism, found in the remains of Aristotle, and Seneca, and Plato, with this exception, that he reasoned for the benefit of his own pocket, while the peripatetic school walked for the benefit of the celestials—thus:

Major—De paiple all love money!

Minor—I'm won ob de paiple!

McNoddy's conclusion—Devil burn me, but I'll make money out ob de politicians!

Directly the reverse, however, was Bungspunger's opinion of the old school, as he was a convert to the brighter theories of his own countryman, Bacon, whom he equalled in morals, if not in genius; though the love of money was equal in both of these celebrated characters, and they took equally commendable ways to rob people of it: moving his deep speculating mind, therefore, on the logical wires that hold together the Baconian structure, he took his premises from that system which has astonished the scholars of mankind.

Baconian Premises—Nothing minute should be disregarded that can give pleasure or pain to a wayfarer in this world!

Bunspungeric Conclusion—Curse me if I'm not right in selling glasses of whisky to the poor!

Mr. Crisp and Mr. Scrape, disdaining—with the clear conscience of strict constructionists—the stumbling-blocks of Greek, and Roman, and English worthies, were alike logical, and belonged to the most modern school, and one that eschews all Majors, Minors, Arguments and Inductions, and clings fixedly to a Conclusion—whether a sequitor or non-sequitor, is a matter of indifference. If any attempted to argue with them, down would go the heavy fist, and out the ebulition of the worthy scholar.

"Damn monopoliars, and its right to sell fish on Sundees."

There was the entire light of the analytic mind; the solid contents of the metaphysical head, whose equals may be seen in so many political schools, that but a little time will elapse before the shades of the old temples of learning and research, the gifted spirits that strove to draw down light from the high home of exalted genius, and even the names of the lofty mountains that stand on the paths of mental intelligence, will be lost in the mists of modern bravos, whose "top and round of ambition" is the "golden eagle." Thus each of the industrious committee indulged in the wonted speculation of their profound systems, until the light of the Baconian gems was cut off by the beams from the broken lamp that caught the eye of Bungspunger.

"Hoil—ha, Mac!" uttered Sandy, winking.

"Yis, impoorted," answered McNoddy, an image of gravity.

"Dirt cheap—any danger?" asked Bungspunger.

"Not a bit—tuck it for an owld debt," said Pimpy.

"Vy, you 're in luck," said Sam Crisp; "who 'd think any one here paid old debts?"

"Oh, thunder!" said Sandy, laughing, "how monstrous green—pay an old debt!"

Here McNoddy and Sandy laughed outright, and continued, as if they enjoyed a simple blunder of Sam.

"Now don't bark at a dog," said the latter; "what coin 's a greasing your fingers? I saw lawyer Jim bring in oil—Pimpy, aint he barking?"

"On my conscience, Sam, you 're a male witch," said Pimpy.

At this interesting moment in the lucubrations of the learned committee, a series of fashionable raps was heared on the cellar door, and McNoddy sprung up the steps to view the form and learn the business of the evening customer. The doors were not locked, nor was there need of fast closing, until the gentlemanly negotiator and political proprietor withdrew to the mild and unmute companionship of his lawful lady; and then, invariably locking in a large dog, who found a bed on the rag-sacks, and whose tones it was supposed would frighten a burglar with their echoing notes, that rolled in the same sweetness as is attributed to the voice of the lowest howler in an Italian troupe. McNoddy soon returned, bringing with him a singular and eccentric gentleman, of large leisure, but small respectability—except upon election days, when, in the rolling eyes of partizans, he was large in both.

His name was James Leryer; but such was the march of improvement in cutting down and off old incumbrances, that his name had suffered under the ordinary cleaver of the popular voice; and in the mouths of boys of modern taste, the names sounded like Lawyer Jim. Jim was a bright member of the school of Modern Partizanship, and a merchant of the peculiar kind who never purchase, but always sell; although it must be recorded that his merchandise, or more truly the splinters and patches of goods sold by him, were in that state which brokers have termed, "worse for wear," and "threadbare," and "seedy;" and woe to the honest publican in this land of equality and anti-aristocracy, whose garment is in either of the above descriptions! for then the curl of the lip and frown of the brow are seen, even on the face of the genteel robber; and the respectability of the poor publican is gone for ever.

The nominal Lawyer was a boon companion of Sante, and was frequently with him in making discovery of the half-burned imperials,

from the Spanish isle, picked up from the vicinage of a hotel door. He was a vocalist, and gloried in marine music, if so we may term the sailor ballads sung in that region; and he could study and derive the tune of any song, if only whistled by a proficient in street harmonies, such as are sometimes executed by a negro, who roves round a market, whistling an entire tune with the noted flourishes of a fife. The celler of the negotiator was the Rialto, where Jim, and others of equal moral traits and immoral features, congregated to sell; and where they always found a Shylock to buy or lend, on terms as brave and ready as those of any similar establishment. Pimpy took his visiter into a nook, where a long conversation ensued, during which the lawyer was heard to coax, and swear, and laugh, and even shout in a musical way, and often become very persuasive when endeavoring to obtain more for an article than the close discretion of the ironmonger deemed it prudent to offer. But seldom could Jim succeed in getting more than one-third of the value of any article, as the knowledge of Pimpy of the value of fragments was unquestioned, and his close-fistedness had been a by-word among the sharks who patronised his mercantile cave. A part of the dialogue that took place may be given, to furnish a hint of its import, during which the profound committee sat smoking quietly, and silently ruminating upon the duties of their appointment.

"Two shellins," said McNoddy; "och, boderation."

"Vell, one and six," returned Jim. "Come, Nod, my love, say so."

"Won shellin," said McNoddy, "divil a hapeth more."

"I don't go it," put in Jim, "I'm blast if I do."

"Vill, den, one and threppens, by de mudder dat bore me," said McNoddy, turning round and receding two steps in great earnest; but happening to look back again, the cunning little man found Jim's eyes wide open and he with evident pleasure crying out—

"Double-jointed, and worth fifty cents—see, Pimp."

"You 're gittin insane, any way," said McNoddy.

"Am, ha! look—cheap—come, Pimpy, buckle to, me father of bargains—be honest," uttered Jim, in a persuasive manner.

At the word honest, the three committeemen, who were enjoying the luxury of American segars, all three of which had been purchased for a solitary copper, winked at each other with a broad look, and remained silent.

"Och, Jem, you 're a sad one; here tuk off wid your fifty cents—you 're kaiping me from the committa of gineral correspondin', and you 'll have your own way—there, off wid you, lim of de law," uttered Pimpy McNoddy, coming forward, and followed by his happy customer, who, recognizing the other committee-men, nodded with familiarity, and with the freedom of an old acquaintance addressed them—

"Ah, ha! my Lord and Landlord, Bungspunger! and gentlemen of the profession, Sir Tom and Saint Sam, by the ghost of the constitution! see here—showing his fifty cent piece—"goin' to the gallery to night to see the new commedy of the "Bowl of Blood or the Blundering Butcher," all in two acts, with the farce of "Lights under Water," said the Lawyer, laughing, as if in anticipation of some facetious thing, to be seen floating in the "Bowl of Blood." "Been down," continued Jim "to see the White-hallers and warn the members of the perfession of the election coming on. We must run that noodle out; damn-me, I'd rather have a long clam for Aldermin, than that brandy mug that 's there now."

"Wot! the devil! you talkin' against the clam-line?" said Tom, in earnest; "you don't s'pose any man of any taste wood wally that shark of an aldermin monopoliar as I wallys a clam?"

"Vy, Tommy, you're grumbling in short metre," said Jim; "d' ye s'pose I speak aginst the perfession wen I've run my legs off to warn the members?"

"Never mind, Jim," said Sam; "lawyers will git clouted, and Tom's always barking at some dog."

"I knows it," said Jim; "but by the ghost of the const'ution, the oyster-cause is my cause, either to uphold the oystermin, or take down the oysters."

Here the happy Jim laughed in the free and unrestrained manner of one who knew no tear from the heart, and seemed likely never to make so painful an acquaintance. Receding a little towards the door, and feeling disposed to indulge in a song, he gave the committee his favorite ballad, well known in the neighborhood, and which at that period was sung by clusters of boys who met at night on cartmen's carts, and grocers' sand-boxes, and in by corners of favorite resort. The tune was a good one, and often passed us, in days long dead, with other the more prized music, that left a deeper impression on the memory of boyhood. The ballad was expressive of one of the feats of that desperate man, Paul Jones, and with the unmatched voice of poor Jim, it done more than rivet attention. The two first verses ran in this wise:—

"American frigate, a frigate of fame,
With guns mounted, forty, called the Richard by name;
Two hundred bold seamen all fond of the can,
And a noble commander—PAUL JONES was the man.

The Lion bore down while the Richard did rake,
Which caused the hearts of bold Britons to quake.
Stand by, my brave seamen, said Jones to his men:
We'll conquer the foeman, or sink on the main."

It might have been the fine voice of the minstrel, or it might have been the peculiar phraseology of the song, or otherwise, because of its relation to the well-known individual, Jones, whose indomitable spirit and great courage were notorious among the seamen, that brought the song into favor; but the singer was always applauded, even by the juvenile horde of ragged listeners; and the sailors who heard it given in the smooth tones of Jim, would have it repeated, even although every repetition cost an auditor the ordinary price of the Lawyer's dram at the bar of Bungspunger, where the former was an amateur in the game of dominos.

Mr. Scrape and Mr. Crisp, who had heard the song repeated a thousand times, listened with an attention that nothing could divert; they ceased smoking, and held their segars apart, and with eyes open and noiseless as the black dog in the cellar, never changed positions until the final end of the sea ditty. But not so McNoddy; the first verse terminated, and so did his sense of being in the presence of harmony. He slept sound throughout every verse after the first; and music on him had an effect that seemed to send him to the land of sleep, as if his soul set its face against the muses and all their votaries—even the unpretending customer who now passed out from the cellar to take with his co-lodger, St. Barts, a shilling's worth each of scenic amusement in the lower part of the city, where the "Bowl of Blood" was to delight those who, like the twain, quaff the "mellow drams."

"Better then theatre-singers," said Sam.

"Can't be touched in the Paul Jones," said Sandy.

"Vy, I've heerd that fellow sing that song ten times in my bar-room, and a dozen sailors would sink to sleep, out of pure pleasure."

"Cum, cum, Bungspunger," said Tom, "that child won't cry in this company."

"Your likker put the tars to-sleep," said Sam.

"Damn it, man, don't I know?" said Sandy; "vy, there wan't strength enough in twelve glasses to put 'em asleep, or any to-sleep—we watered the likker till the color faded out."

"A nat'ral curosity," said McNoddy, wide awake; but whether alluding to Jim or Sandy's liquor, was a question.

"A smart chap ven likker an't in 'im," said Mr. Crisp, shaking his head.

"St. Bart's 'ill ruin 'im, if he's uncareful," said Tom, in sober earnest.

"Ruin 'im!" roared Sandy, with a loud laugh; "now, Tommy, drive in the stable, and play the double-six—oh, Lord! make winegar sour, and call it ruinin'."

The committee had, so far, labored but little in the duties for the prosecution of which they had convened, and that little had resulted in no action, nor even in a suggestion whose adoption would lead to action. It might be that each felt somewhat delicate in taking the lead in any course that involved mental exertion. Their scholastic studies had evidently been pursued in dissimilar institutions; but this was a minute thing when it is considered that their splendid aims agreed and harmonized perfectly; and these were to plant a patriotic colony, and reap the fruits of the enterprise. Or it might be that every member, supposing his fellow-devotee was prepared with some proposition in respect to the mode of operating generally followed by such conventions, waited the proper season to consider whatever might be offered. Be the truth as it might, neither ventured to anticipate the other in offering suggestions or expedients, which certainly spoke in favor of their individual discretion, and perfect willingness to be led by the collar like a quadruped instructed to bark at a given period, to shake his tail in the great cause of human freedom, and rattle his chain for the love he bears—not his country, but—his country's devoted masters.

The committee on colonizing were specimens of pure modesty—generally three of the four aspire to be chairman; and the entire quadruple are ambitious to be made secretaries, in order that the name may appear conspicuously in "The Flying Fish," or some other partizan sheet. How slight is the cause that elevates the instinct of the mental animal! and these same animals are known to have struggled fiercely even for that small distinction, viz: the chairman's seat! Not so with the gentlemanly forms of the colonizing committee—they set an example to all petti-fogging lawyers, young or gray-haired; older partizans, who wish their names rung through the ranks of a multitude, in order to attract the centripetal force of the appointing power; middle-aged dandies, whose sole view is to be considered public-spirited men, in the low sluices of the political ways; and volunteering friends, who thrust themselves forward to aid some picaroon who is to be re-imbursed the cash outlay expended in some unsuccessful effort of his party; when the colonist was hired, and paid, and received the greeting of the courteous scoundrel, the recognition of the "highly respectable," and the quiet smile of the Christian, who, on the next Sabbath, might be seen kneeling at an altar, when an unseen eye was examining the hollowness of his prostituted heart!

The learned and ingenuous committee continued to smoke with the perseverance of men habituated during a long life to that practice, which forms a burning trait in the education of every colored gentleman of any pretensions

to society of the accomplished kind. And it may be written without fear of opposing opinions, that if all other committees did nothing worse than smoke for their masters, their exertions, though productive of no general good, would, at the same time, create no positive or particular evil. So far the committee under consideration might be considered the pink and paragon of all committees, formed either for the public good or that portion of the public who happened to be their needy and very particular friends.

Even among the many municipal committees, how often has it been seen that one or more met at an appointed hour, and after sitting a length of time, comparing watches and opinions borrowed for the occasion, and exchanging puffs of Spanish smoke, adjourned, leaving the spittoon the solitary recipient of their wise labors and municipal bounty! and if the gentlemen forming the colonizing committee found it convenient to copy the elevated manners of city savens, and their auxiliaries, it must be conceded that the imitators were right; for when men eat hearty and pay nothing, where is the patriot that would not follow the lucky leaders?

The quadruple smoked in the silence of positive enjoyment, until the keen eyes of Bungspunger, always abroad for profit or amusement, fell upon the broad bottom of a huge brass kettle; he eyed its dimensions with a fine, pleasant aspect, as if a thought had struck him, which, like a stroke of good luck, he instantly endured without a groan. The kettle seemed, from its capacious bottom, to have been used for simmering the wardrobe of a family, composed of twenty-one children, from the small one whose pantalets had heard the sighs of a Russian wind, to the largest one, who was breathing the first sigh of manhood,

"There," said Sandy, suddenly, "that's it."

"Which?" said Pimpy, starting from an inchoate sleep.

"That kettle—dominos—a game on the bottom," observed Sandy, willing to exchange mental for physical labor.

"De happiest taught dat iver shuk your noddle," muttered the great ironmonger, producing the horn pieces, and apparently happy to leave the philosophy of old time, and all its majors and minors.

It was immediately proposed, seconded and carried, after the approved manner of conventional law, that the owner of the counting-house should remain, and face the dexterous Bungspunger; and that the two philosophers of the modern school should continue *vis-a-vis*, and be partners in the interesting game of numerical matching, ordinarily called dominos. The pieces were shuffled on the mammoth kettle, and the selections made by the smoking clique, who were all good players, as they had practised often in the notorious hotel of Sandy, and seemed to be very fond of the game, it tallied so agreeably with their far-seeing intellects.

"It won't do to play for a joke," observed Sandy, "bekase a man can't always pay if he loses; wot d' ye say? three slaps of gin and segars for Crisp."

"The ting is agraid on," said McNoddy.

"Vell, Sam, vot's your upshot?" asked Sandy.

"Agreed, Bungy, in course," put in Sam.

"Won think more," said Sandy; "you know I play under Hoyle; I larnt that way, and can't 'elp it; I come the science; play your heaviest pieces first, that's the soul of the game: no talking over the board, that's murder in any game; no whisperin' or vinkin', that's not gentlemanly. Now for 'it—who's the twelve vidders?"

"Here's the double-six—now play, Pimpy," said Tom.

As the latter placed his piece upon the kettle, a rapping was heard on the outside, and a female voice followed.

"English Sal," said McNoddy—"de divil burn me!"

"Push 'er off," said Sandy; "tell 'er you're busy, or we'll have a shower of curses, and the Lord knows wot all."

Mr. McNoddy went to stop the ingress of the lady, but he endeavored in vain; down she adventured—a figure and face with manners that sometimes—though very seldom—may be met with in the bye-roads of life. She was six feet high, with coarse features; a form as straight as a rod, with an arm of man's muscular power; and she had a voice with scarcely a feminine tone. England gave birth to the Amazonion lady, and hence her soubriquet, "English Sal." She looked at the logical committee, and handed a small bundle to Mr. McNoddy, who seemed to have lost his close keenness in dealing, as he advanced whatever she required; but this was done to buy out the lady, and ensure quick riddance of one who had the impudence of a "red-headed tar," to use the language of Mr. Bungspunger.

"Why, you're lib'raller then afore, old Pop," said the fair lady to Mr. McNoddy, who willingly would have doubled his price for her exit.

"Dere, tuk off," said McNoddy, in an angry tone.

"None o' that, old Pop," said the lady, fiercely, "or I'll take a liberty with the rag in your phiz."

"There; now leave, Sal," cried Bungspunger.

"Vell, don't forgit fair manners to fair ladies, old Pop," observed the visiter, swaggering off with arms a-kimbo.

Before leaving, she made a low bow to the silent members of the committee, who looked upon her as if the form had been seen too often to receive anything but a vacant stare.

"That thing 'd make a glorious sailor," said Sandy, who had seen her exert her power upon some flogged cruiser from the navy-yard. "I'll bet she'd whip a ship's crew, and frighten a midshipman."

"I put her in among the wenches," said Sam.

"Jist wot I had on my tung," observed McNoddy, "or rudder amoong the niggers."

"A thunderin' dancer," said Sandy, shaking his head; "you should see 'er on my sanded floor, in Fisher's hornpipe, and black Pete fiddling; Christmas! wot a Julius Cæsar she'd make in the French ballits!"

"She is a livily tar," said Tom, "and sticks close enuf to a jolly dog wot's just been paid off."

"Great," said Bungspunger; "such vind and animal spirits—vot a pigeon wing that hussy cuts on sand."

This celestial eulogium, conferred by Mr. Bungspunger on the Amazonion danseuse at the elegant cotilion parties sometimes given by that gentleman, was no doubt a merited one; as she was noted for robbing every sailor that crossed over the river for the groveling fun of his class: and was sometimes seen to pommel such as did not read with sufficient accuracy the instructions in the counterfeit detector; but scattered silk paper, with only a bird's-eye view at its numerical announcement.

The committee resumed their arduous labors at that celebrated game we have mentioned, and which, in scientific amount, may be considered a pin's breadth above push-pin, which it seems to have succeeded naturally; as the requirements of judgment ordinarily displayed in both may be considered as fairly balanced. The game was played earnestly, and was well contested, and with all that close mental application reasonably to be expected from men of their intellectual standing; few errors were detected, and these, the moral state of the parties being considered, must have been accidental; and the contest terminated in a victory for the Water Dog and his partner.

"There, I wouldn't believed it, if my mother had left it in her last will and testament," said Sandy; "we're beaten, McNoddy, by a long nine; but keep up your spirits, my heavy-armed dragoon, the best of familes lose by small figures!"

"Dat is if dey go on tick in a grocery," returned Pimpy; "what a male witch you are!"

The company rose up from the miscellaneous seats, and stretching, after the manner of morning risers, were about adjourning, when, as if the subject had for the first time occurred to these choice committee-men, Sandy, with many haws and ahems, proposed that something should be done in regard to the purpose for which they were convened. This proposition of course was agreed upon, but then its accomplishment presented some difficulties. Neither of the honorable members were very ready with the pen, except when that small portion of the wing of a gander could be used by them as a pick-tooth; neither had the most remote idea of the words that ought, in grammatical style, to fashion a report from a committee, which would show the proceedings from the beginning to the end, and at the bottom be subscribed with the names of the Chairman and Secretary.

Here were difficulties which to common minds would have appeared insurmountable—not so with the choice gentlemen who had the honor to serve on the committee of "colonization;" they were men who had stemmed currents more formidable than any that appeared at the present time; and who believed that things could be done as satisfactory in a new as an old manner.

"All we got to do is, to resolve by word of mouth; don't we eat and drink by mouth; vy not resolve?" said Bungspunger.

"Iligent," said Pimpy, "and thin there's no naid of a fool's cap, or goose faither."

"Pimpy, you're as bright as Lawyer Jim's Hoil," said Sam, winking at the joke.

"Vell," said Sandy, "go on, my bucks, now propose"—

"Which?" said Pimpy—

"Vot?" said Tom—

"How?" said Sam—

"Vell," responded Sandy, "hi see't: I'll tell you vot, we must lodge over one hundred; Pimpy can take twenty, we ken put away thirty in the stable around the corner, filled with clean straw; and the balance I must stow in my ball-room and garrit, and let my lodgers on the free list go down on the dock for one night; the'll be a moon out, unless she plays a double six full of clouds; and who the devil 'd think of robbing sitch cattle as St. Barts and Lawyer Jim. We'll all git paid for the lodging if the fish-cause succeeds—and if it don't, vy who the devil cares fur one night lost in sich a cause?"

"Good," said Pimpy; "you talk like a shadman."

"Like a sinsible clam-man," said Tom—

"And ought to belong to the perfession," said Sam.

"Now, Pimpy," said Sandy, "we adjourn in course; shut up your counting-room, and we'll move over to the hotel and wash the victors at domino."

The laborious committee adjourned, in good health and spirits, and wandered over to the premises of Bungspunger to imbibe

some of the latter article, with the exception of the singular Sam Crisp, who never drank ardent spirits; and who chose as his leaf of victory the leaf that wraps the bowels of a segar, which carries with it the name of American—the pseudo Spanish being at a price that forbade their consummation by the members of the economical committee, especially as they labored with only a faint prospect of being remunerated by the finance committee of their clam friends.

The calm and inoffensive McNoddy, after drinking the health of the two conquerors, bent his unhurried steps towards his domestic castle, to aid as he was wont in some trifling duties that had reference to the nursing department. There were several small McNoddys covered by the roof of the castle, each of whom it had long been remarked in the neighborhood were very forward proficients in what may be termed the natural science of crying; and although some of the ladies of the neighborhood might have boasted of the angelic features of their young adepts in nursery music; yet, when the heirs at law of Mr. McNoddy, seated in the middle of the floor, commenced a lesson in that well-known science, their faces presented a picture of such grotesque and broadly comic distortions, as to be altogether indescribable; and which had induced even McNoddy to suppose that some invisible wires were twisting the unseen muscles in the faces of his high-toned infants.

If a piece of bread were wanted by a small McNoddy, an immediate resort was had to the science; and if the bread wanted butter, in the keen view of another, the tones rose higher and higher; and when a call was made for saccharine matter, in the shape of molasses or an adhesive lump of cheap sugar, then issued the noises of the proficients, and louder and louder, as if each successive effort were intended to startle the neighborhood, and stun the senses of the listeners. And it was said by some people residing too near the negotiator's castle not to become amateurs in such music—whose names we suppress from motives that must be apparent—that upon the peaceable and highly esteemed seventh part of a week, called washing-day, the juvenile musicians above named, showed a devotion unparalleled for the same science, by joining for several hours in a combined cry, in which the tenor notes were horribly commingled with the treble; and that if practice without study perfected performers, the infants would be prodigies in the tenor and treble; as they never ventured on the base scale, except at midnight, when the notes, losing their way in the dark, made their egress in a coarse blundering manner through the nose.

No music was heard in the chambers of his wooden castle, when Pimpy opened his door with caution, and thereat he felt like the gratified father of amiable children. There were two reasons for his gladness: the first was the total suspension of all vocal noise, and the other, the happy termination of his stupendous mental duty as a member of the committee on "colonizing," whose labors were only relieved by the game of dominos, and the dram that followed its termination!

"Vy, vot kept you so late, Mr. McNoddy?" said the amiable mother of the vocal prodigies.

"Committa bus'ness, in coorse," returned he.

"And how 'ill the 'lection go?" inquired the lady.

"It 'ill be a clam victory in coorse; we settled that an hour agoo," said he.

"I'm right glad on't," observed Mrs. McNoddy; "it isn't convanient to go for fish till Sundy mornin'."

"It isn't that, Mrs. McNoddy," observed Pimpy, with a voice somewhat elevated, and a manner resembling, as nearly as he could make it, that of a deliverer of moral lectures; "its the constetooshinil quistion that the clam maiting go upon; its fraidom of barter, and fraidom of conscience, and sale ven you can sell; and de law and de frankcheeses dat cum wid de law. I tould 'em, sid I, the divil tak a shill fish wid no bowels, and a fishermon wid no principils:" and here Pimpy felt like a man who had excused himself to his wife, and in his own mind, for taking a side of the question that might redound to his profit. Self-interest has but one eye; and in all his dealings with the world, politically or otherwise, Mr. McNoddy never gazed upon a transaction with any other.

"And when shill we wisit the Seisers?" asked Mrs. Mc.

"Any night but the 'lection times," said he; "and I wish it was all settled; for I don't want to be at odds and ends wid dat fam'ly."

The lady agreed with her husband, to give him a day's notice, in order that he might prepare himself, shut up his counting-room, and take off his beard, which seemed like a multitudinous crowd of red wires, that brought tears in the eyes of his dark barber whenever that sensitive man endeavored to remove the red bristles. Mr. McNoddy sat for half an hour with his eyes upon the floor, and his head nodding to the several lines in the rag carpet; and having dozed again and again, he got up and retired to his pillow, and that calm, quiet and dreamless sleep which can only be known to the celebrated and gentlemanly dealer in old junk, who, having been in the lofty trade for a quarter century, and having grown rich in the beautiful road of barter, despises the prevalent egotism of monopoly, and kindly shares with a police officer the heavy and honest results of his fair business transactions!

CHAPTER VII.

New characters at the Palace of a Republican Lord.

There was a busy time in the leasehold premises of the widow Seiser, in preparing for a visit to the greatest nabob who had ever borne the name of Seiser. Time was occupied preparing for a start; and then inquiries were made whether some indispensable article might not have been forgotten. Then there was had a strict examination of every thing each deemed requisite to take; and every one reflected long and often: several times Miss Angelica doubted whether she had her pocket-handkerchief, and then she found the article in her own hand, and cried out, with a long breath, "did you ever!" The two small boys were examined thoroughly, as if a doubt had been expressed of their possession of legs and arms: while Madam Chinchilla Twittez La Pump, cried out, "oh, mon ami—mais—tout bien!"—which nobody thought worth translating or applying. Then the old lady, reflecting for a moment, forgot at its end what was the subject of her cogitations, and found herself in the same situation she was before she attempted to think.

The Captain, dressed in his black stock and blue coat, with other portions of his raiment to suit, sat with commendable patience, waiting until the last "ready" should be pronounced, before he emerged from the domicil. At length the party, ready or unready, left the house, and commenced the crooked line of march; and it proved a wonder that nothing was left behind, to draw forth a heavy sigh from the female movers. Passing to the street, the party was fortunate in meeting with Mr. Edward Seiser, who, taking the Angel and Madam, acted as leader of the company, and volunteered to carry the lap-dog with the concurrence of its owner; but that owner declined; and pug was wrapped up in a yard and a half of the shawl of his mistress, which in size might have outmeasured a counterpane, and in colors have shamed the variegation of the rainbow. Many streets had to be crossed, and many to be threaded; and all along they met the miscellaneous crowd of big and little, and rich and poor.

Much care was necessary in passing from one side to opposite of streets; as carriages, burden-wagons and omnibuses were run and raced as usual, to the delight of a number of dogs, who barked at the joke; and another number, who drove the whirling vehicles through the crowded courses, with all the hilarity of semi-drunken frolickers, and with danger to foot passengers, who were deemed impertinent for venturing on the cross-paths, while the mounted and unmounted brutes were flying athwart the same. So on they journeyed from street to street, under the face of the mild moon, and by the aid of her light; the only sheen that is afforded without taxation; and the party keeping together, appeared like a small coterie, who had sailed with holiday wings from the country, to accommodate city relatives, by boarding and lodging with the latter a few weeks, without charge or assessment.

There is a broad and visible line—always deprecated by the philanthropist—between the rich and poor: although the theory of some institutions imposes upon transatlantic belief the unrealized assumption that all are free and equal. There is, and always has been—it will be always while the springs of human action remain dissimilar—a marked distinction between the means of living, the power to obtain those means, and the style of living of those same people—the rich and the poor.

We may read of the astonishing distinction, in the Old World, between the East and West ends of a mammoth city, and the crowds that pour their little breaths out, merely to live, until they meet that other end which the lessons of mankind call—final. In this New World, and in this city, we need no reading or instruction in regard to the matter; for he who has eyes may trace distinctly, at one end, the numerous hovels and tenements that give shelter to the masses of poor; the hardy, honest laborer; the hard-striving mechanic; the hewer of sweated brow, and the drawer of the burdens that shorten life, harras its days and nights, and throw a cold blast upon the last moments of the heart's existence: and at the other end, the same eyes may trace the huge piles of marble, and brick, and ornamented mansions, where luxury, the child of dishonored blood, is pampered by the wasteful; where disease is encouraged by the idle, and the fine feelings of the young heart are lost in the coldness of pride; and where life goes out, and the ashes are robed in the pride of purple, and carried to the tomb in sickening pomp, as if the bones of the dead could not be received by the grave, until the tinsel of earth had poured upon them the mockery of its show!

The moon shed her voluntary light on the blue covering that crowned the lofty dome of No. 13 Mahogany Place, but left the face of the elegant mansion completely in the shade. Yet there it was in its stateliness, and with its lofty porches; the abode of formal extravagance, with its wide and commodious court, and its lofty and nurtured trees and lustrous ballustrades, surmounted by gilt-edged lamps—its lattices of beauty, finished frames and plate-glass, and coat of recent polish: all looking as if the presence of a great monarch had covered its shades with the sheen of

beauty, and prepared it, not for the abode of man's comfort, but a home for the golden hand to throw its improvidence from, and ask the passing boors to lift the covering from the head, in token of obeisance to its grandeur and its taunt! None were stirring near the silent place, as clean as if the scavengers had bent the knee, and swept with industrious hand the dust that fell down with the day-wind that brought it.

There were other domes in the same street as high and as proud, and with the same class of costly decorations, and giving shelter to spirits as purely Christianly as those who festered in the sunshine of fortune whose rays irradiated in the first named. In one there was a great over-reacher in the art of speculation, who trod the earth with the ease and vanity of one whose destiny, apparently, was far beyond the contingencies of this world's changes. In another, there was a lofty President of some corporate body, whose duties were daily, and only done because the rich one found them an agreeable recreation for a single hour in a day; while the day-long labor of the unblest and toilsome procured but in one month the pay of that avaricious idler for a course of twenty-four hours. In another, was a splendid pauper, who had escaped by the danger of paying honest debts with the aid of the law of a land whose penal rule should have given him a resting-place for life, to draw the sweat from his brow and the remorse from his full heart. In another, was one whose reputation had suffered, and he had been forced abroad to improve by absence; and when he returned, fashion threw her mantle over him in all his guilt, and her votaries smiled upon the rich libertine.—"What commentaries are such facts, upon the legal equality of a proud land!" thought the Captain, while gazing at the silent pile.

"This is the house or castle, I know it," said Captain John, rapping his cane upon the broad stone, like a well-instructed watchman, and halting the party before venturing to pull the silver-plated handle of the communicative bell—"How silent they are," observed the Angel, endeavoring to realize the fact that one of her name was the owner and resident of the pile at the foot of which the party were standing; and endeavoring also to imagine what, and what sorts of things, could be bought to fill the grandiloquent house.

"Well, now," said the Captain, "for touching the wires of announcement; bells are an improvement—not fire-bells, for they improve, not even a body without a soul—but house-bells, that stir the lazy waiter, and awake him from his doze, when the indolent sleep seals his eye-lids, and gives him a few moments of true, gentlemanly indulgence."

"They always take their time," observed Edward; and sometimes two will quarrel, as to whose duty it may be to answer a ring."

"That's the way of the world," said tain John; "the clown has method a as his master?—

"And an equal enjoyment in followin put in the former.

"Certainly," responded the Captain; the servitor often laughs at the inanity o fool who pays him."

The door was opened by a mulatto, v heavy mop of curled hair, which natur twisted at his birth; a white jacket and and spotless apron, and shoes whose outshone his eye-balls. He had three on his finger, a clean napkin in his hand he gazed upon the visitors a few mon as if in great doubt whether he should he saw their quality, and stood as erect statue—and as silent.

"Well," said the Captain, who kne class well, "are you dumb? we wish t Mr. Seiser—come—hurra!"

"I suspect—that is, I presume—that ter mayn't be at liberty for company," c ejaculated the waiter.

"Pshaw! go and tell him visitors are ing, you yellow scoundrel, or I'll blow brains out with a tobacco-box," shoute Captain.

The party laughed at the earnest blun of the Captain; and Mrs. Seiser decl that the yellow fellow would not retur of "mere spiteful gentility," as she calle but the Captain informed her that he bel ed to a class whose instinct induced the be driven, and not coaxed; and that threat to such an one was more effectual anything else—except small coin.

The negro went up and came down the genteel step of a dancing-master, and distended: he had been thunderstruck thunderbolt, but did not know it; he ret ed, and in smiles, perhaps borrowed from master—he was civil, shut the front door, inner hall-door, and made a bow as the c pany filed up stairs.

Down he went into the kitchen, told Williams, the waiting maid; Mrs. Bute, nurse; Miss Trap, the chamber-maid; two cooks, and the scullion, and his fel waiter, that an American commodore in dress had rung, and escaped his critical all the party laughed, and as the cat fell moment in a pail of slops, the laugh was tinued; and there he sat the butt for kit ridicule and base-meant puns.

The party was shown, by the upper us into the back parlor, and left alone for a minutes to take in all that shone and gli ed, and glistened and reflected. If all been liquid that they drank in admira they would have been intoxicated and affri ed; as all was solid, they were only into ted and delighted. Each looked at the car and the tables, and glass, and vases of flow

and sofas, ottomans, and chairs, and the looking-glass, as large nearly as the side of the house the party came from. The carpet was elegant, and tigers appeared thereon with tail and stiff whispers—cat-like, but more savage: a lion was there, trying to roll a globe on his lioness, but she resented, and pushed back the yellow ball: a family quarrel—what a shame for the king of the beasts! then another wild beast, on the same carpet, was on the eve of springing on a small lion; but the lion seemed safe, as the rich and beautiful rug covered him all but his whiskers, and thereby he showed his taste in keeping them in sight. Circles, and lines, and immense borders marked the bold exterior of that same carpet; and it seemed a curiosity, and so it was; and so were the mahogany masses of antique French patterns, and gilded quivers and arrows, and the scarlet damask curtains from the looms of Paris, relieved by the snow-white lace drapery; and the family portraits, all done in oil by the greatest masters that ever brushed a whole family on canvas; each face in a frame, and taken when the owner seemed in a happy frame of mind; for not one of the whole set had a tear in either eye. All were astonishing to those who are in the habit of gazing on rag carpets, pine tables, and Windsor chairs; and who are owners of no portraits, but find enough in the originals to thank God for, when the heart is called upon for the duty it owes to those who cling to the affections in the darkness of poverty.

The door opened, but the great gentleman to whom the visit was paid did not enter; no, it was a gentleman of the name of Augustus Seiser, who stood in the same nearness of connexion to Mrs., the widow Seiser, as Mr. Edward. The latter introduced him to his distant connections, whom he had never seen, of course; who could expect that a fine, gentlemanly clerk, on a huge salary of one thousand dollars per annum, would visit a poor relation, who was a mere hucksteress, and worked hard? No; he knew himself too well; he moved in too elegant a circle to stoop to such degrading sacrifices, and lose caste in the eyes of his fellow-associates.

Mr. Augustus Seiser was dressed in the ton, from the ample store of a men's mercer, and each article was charged to him at double the worth, according to the custom of such mercers, who run great risk in trusting one half of their customers, and make the paying portion contribute, by over-charge, to equalize the well-known account, entitled Profit and Loss.

The habits of Mr. Augustus were to pursue business until four P. M.: dine at a restaurateur or hotel, and then adjourn to billiard-rooms, and exercise his gambling taste and propensities in the sinking game of poule—so called, from the fact that the money of all the customers, at the termination of an evening's amusement, is found in a pool that belongs to the domain of the table-keeper. There was an establishment for the play of poule, with or without modern pins, known by the name of Red's, where Mr. Augustus scattered the greater portion of his salary, in company with a few lawyers, lawyers' clerks, and merchants' and brokers' clerks; who carried rattans varnished and curled at top, or large gold-headed canes, that make young gentlemen feel brave when there is no danger to life or limb. Augustus Seiser had a pair of whiskers that seemed the very jewel of his eyes, cultivated with care, scented daily, trimmed by his barber semi-weekly, and greased weekly. On his finger were two large rings, with a blue or green stone; and his white kid gloves or salmon color, were the eternal companions of one or other of his hands, or in the ever-shining hat that covered his head. As to the abilities of such a man, his dress bespeaks his mind so truly, that it would be impossible to prove to any reasonable person, that they reached the common capacity of the head waiter of the house he now appeared in.

At length the Lion among the Seisers made his appearance, and really looked as if he were the owner of all the rare and gaudy furniture around. His suit was black; he might be sixty, but his manners seemed those of a younger man; easy, graceful, dignified; while upon his face there lingered a smile that seemed to have taken a lease of the premises, and intended to remain there. In truth, he spoke with a smile, nodded with one, questioned with one, and answered with one—all alike. His address was mild, his reasoning plausible, and his whole demeanor, in business or social times, prepossessing and winning: no wonder such a man, once as poor as others of his name, had amassed wealth in ways and by means not exactly known, but with the same manners as marked him now—pleasing, insinuating and eternally smiling; what advantages such men have over nervous dupes and choleric ignoramuses!

The great Mr. Seiser shook all the ladies by the hand, and kissed their hands in the bargain; then he took the hands of the gentlemen, and then those of the small Seisers. He had a compliment and a smile for each lady, and a gentlemanly remark for each of the males, and a school-boy touch for the small Seisers; but each got a smile, and all of the same mild character. Then Madam La Pump, feeling very elevated by the attentions shown to her, and which resembled so much the polished behavior of the dignitaries of her own country, either by accident or design, exhibited her little dog, white as the cambric handkerchief and kid gloves of Mr.

Augustus Seiser; and the great man patted the dog, and admired it; and even made an offer, in gold and silver, for the body and wool of Nappo, but all in vain; as Madam La Pump told him, that the King of France should never have him, even for his weight in gold.

The massive mahogany folding-doors, with silver-plated nobs, were either intentionally or otherwise left partially open, and the beauty of the front room outshone the dazzle of its connecting apartment. In the front room were three of the daughters of the great Mr. Seiser, and several gentlemen, who seemed to the eyes of Angelica Seiser to be very ill at ease; as they rose up and bowed so often, and flourished white handkerchiefs, and played with their eye-glasses so frequently, she could not imagine what amusement they were practising; but it happened to be no amusement at all; it was only the excessive politeness of the gentlemen, who, in entertaining a circle of ladies of the most fashionable pretensions, conclude that the performance cannot be over-acted; and they certainly are in a great measure correct, for where the sentiment is juvenile, the actions will appear suitable, if simple and redundant in the extreme: and there are so few men of good sense who partake of the frivolous repast fashion affords its caterers, that the simple food administered is most suitable for the empty heads and hearts that convene for its consumption.

"Well," said Mr. Seiser, "you will wonder what induced me to send for all of you to my house; and as the story is short, I will give it in as few words as possible; but as you have walked a great distance, you must be in want of some refreshments;" and here he smiled, and rang the bell, whose last tingle had not done ere the door was opened, and the servant received his orders. Wine was produced in the dark and labelled junk bottles, and jelleys, and confects, and rich cakes, were served to suit the taste of the ladies and the judgment of the gentlemen, and the sudden and enormous appetite of the small Seisers, who seemed surprised into a feast, for which they were fully prepared and sharply set.

"It is a long while since the death of an old ancestral relative of ours occurred in England," said the great Mr. Seiser, "leaving a property worth a few thousand pounds to his descendants, but encumbered with three life estates; the descendants living who are to inherit at the termination of these life estates are scattered abroad, and I believe few are in England to claim the amount of their inheritance. We are the only heirs of one of the families entitled; and even for us to recover our just rights, is very difficult: first, on account of our non-residence; secondly, on account of the expense, which has been very large, in litigation arising in similar cases; and again, the uncertainty of the value, if any, of the share to which we have a claim. Advances must be made, to ensure the active exertions of legal agents, and counsel must be employed. If we suppose that the share to which we are entitled amounts to two hundred pounds, it is very probable that the expense will amount to nearly one half. My anxiety to learn the most accurate state of the affairs, induced me to extend my correspondence; but I have not been able satisfactorily to reach the information I desired. In order to recover this amount, whatever it may be—small it must be, from the very smallness of the original devise—I think that all the shares should be owned by one person, as in that case the recovery would be easier, and perhaps sooner had, if had at all.

"Now, I propose to buy all the shares; and by getting competent deeds of transfer, and having all the essential formalities affixed to them, enter the lists on the original ground, and make battle with all competitors, and stand the hazard of recovery or total loss."

"And what may be the value of my interest?" said Augustus Seiser, who had commenced a golden dream, which had faded considerably.

"Why," said the great Seiser, "I would venture fifty dollars for your interest, and the same for each of the three other interests: Mrs. Seiser's, Miss Seiser's, and Mr. Edward's, as my agent is buying other shares."

"Is there no mode of ascertaining more particularly the value of each share?" said the Captain.

"None, sir," answered the great Seiser; "at least my correspondents have exhausted time, patience, inquiries, and a constant industry—all to no purpose: and to give you a truly candid opinion," he continued, with a smile, "I don't believe I shall realize one half of my advances; but as my agent will purchase some of the shares, I should be willing to purchase these."

"It is but a small offer," said Mr. Edward—"fifty dollars."

"But a little is a good deal to the poor," said Mrs. Seiser.

"True, madam, very true," said the great Seiser;—allow me to help you to wine."

"There will be no danger of your reclaiming the sum paid," said the Captain, drily.

"That could not be, my dear sir; the contract is a very simple one—fifty dollars for a release—it stands for ever," said the great Seiser;" our firm, sir, individually or collectively, never recede or re-claim; and our transactions are to hundreds of thousands."

"I beg your pardon," said the Captain, bowing, "I've heard the substance of that remark before."

"Granted, sir," said he of the firm of Grasp, Gripe, Grip and Seiser, "provided you will do justice to the wine; it is said to be forty, making an allowance of fifteen years for the overstrain of the wine-dealer; you ought to do justice to sherry a quarter of a century old."

Then he smiled blandly, and assisted the ladies to wine, and the juvenile Seisers to cakes, and gladened their hearts thereby; and Augustus Seiser, Esq., with white gloves, took his wine, and nodded genteelly to all, dreaming that the next offer would be one hundred, and not fifty; as he happened to owe just then, for tailors' demands, debts of poule origin, and other borrowed money; for it takes a vast salary to support a fool in his folly, and in his own fashionable style.

Mr. Edward drank and bowed to all, not thinking of his fifty dollar offer; being out of debt, and possessed of good sense, and honest integrity, and not fearing the bailiff, or constable, or the tailor's collector.

The Captain paid his respects while drinking in a manner that seemed habitual with him, and which had its great charm of being graceful and unrestrained, and so independent as to inspire respect.

The ladies drank the wine, and bit on the cakes and confects, and seemed as happy as if it were done at home—the things were so good, the wine so lively, and the smiles of the great Seiser so inviting.

The Captain told Mr. Seiser, that they, including Mr. Edward, and excluding Mr. Augustus, would consider upon his proposition, and let him know the result in a short time.

At the same time the Banker assured the Captain with his usual smile, and without knowing that the Captain was an heir, that it would be much for the benefit of the poor widow, and her children and sister, to take his offer; and he would feel proud, if in that way he could aid the deserving, and at the same time assert a private right, according to law, and before the local court, that must do justice in a land of freedom; that is, supposing a litigation would be had and hazarded; and he begged the Captain to use his influence to have his offers taken—merely on account of the recipients, not on his account at all. The Captain promised to examine closely into it, and send word of their determinations; and as he knew some channels of information that might be made subservient to his purpose, the probability was, that the poor family would do as directed by him. This brought a newer smile in the face of the great financier; and wine was passed around again, and cake to the small Seisers, and a small morsel to the still snowy form of the lap-dog, whose silence was unbroken by a solitary bark, which proves that pugs can behave well in the parlor of peers as well as in humble apartments.

The company now ceased conversing, as the well-known sounds of a musical instrument were heard in the front apartment.

In that room, where smiles of beaux and belles were passed like unto a floating currency of fashion; where so many bows were made, and slightly returned by the ladies, young and fair, and of lofty courtesy, there rose up sounds of strings of various tones, some light and passing without echo, and some deeper, that find, and pause upon, the listening ears of the human heart.

Then a soft young voice blended its breathings with all these sounds, and floated around the snowy cornices, among the flowers, and lines, and circles of the high ceilings, and filled the corners of the room, and shook the flame of the lights, and mingled in the polished leaves of the gilded furniture, and roved amid the deep folds of the crimson drapery, and came out of the opening of the folding doors, like the song of a dreaming bird, that deemed the time for a morning lay had come, and poured its harmony at the bidding of its Maker.

There was stillness in both apartments, and the music of the beautiful girl, in strains of melancholy sweetness, found a rest in every ear, and seemed to win a pensive auditor in the monied lord, and the spendthrift, and the old and young, and the maid and the widow. On rolled the notes, softer and softer, and laid their gentle fingers on the golden feelings, and awakened them in whispers of summer airs, and bound them in a thrall so pleasing, that the heart appeared to beat in a new region, where there was no unkindness, nor harsh voices, nor cold forms of poor humanity; but where all was purity, and love, and mild pleasure; where the strong, and the weak, and the poor, and the proud, might breathe in the silence of the soul's hope, and die with a smile on the living lip, and a look of piety on the closing eye.

There was a solemn look in the face of the rich father, and it was blended with a slight smile, that lingered and brightened, as tone after tone laid their lovely offering to his silent senses, and bound them with the invisible power the pure child holds over the love of a parent, when her voice is the air of music, and her form is one of the fairy things that wander from childhood, in the home of life, 'till laid in the quiet of the sandy grave.

When these sounds ceased, the gay gentlemen arose and bowed, and declared repeatedly their thanks; and who could doubt the trueness of such declarations? and there were others who heard and declared in silence, and paid a mental compliment to the performer with a willing heart, and honest; and these were the family of the humble Seisers.

With many shakes of the hands, and bows and smiles, the great cash partner of the firm of Grasp, Gripe, Grip and Seiser, parted with his company at the parlor door; where the aforesaid dark servant received them with good manners, and showed them to the street entrance with a low bow, and a particular smile at the Captain. The Captain made a bow in departing, and told the servant he looked the gentleman; and then winked at one of the Seisers, who also bowed to the dark one, as the door closed with gentleness. The servant stalked down to the kitchen with much importance, and the compliment of an officer in undress, in his possession, as he thought, while the departing company moved away in the brighter light of the high running moon, silent in her silvery race.

At the corner of the broad straight avenue, the *sacra via* of our modern Rome, the distinguished Mr. Augustus Seiser parted with his poor relatives; and taking Mr. Edward with him part of his journey, he trod the pavement sounding his huge cane, and talking importantly to his companion about the great Seiser, his horses and household. The Captain and his troupe directing their course East, went on leisurely; some of them talking faster than they were walking; and a long time passed before they reached the small house. Their sentry, Tom Scrape, had fallen asleep, and having eaten supper, dreamed that a ninety pound shot was on his breast; but subsequently ascertained that it was that well-known sensation whose heavy name is the Night-mare.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Economist and the Spendthrift, and the accidental meeting of the latter with an Enthusiast.

The two Seisers, opposite as the points of two extremes, in all the essential characteristics of men sanguine but inexperienced, though each of business habits and industrious in his ways, passed down that fashionable artery which extends through the heart of the city, called "Broadway," and upon the fashionable side of that notoriously straight lane: for not only have the gilded fools and fops, and ungilded figures of the modes imported, the males and females, saints and sinners—those belonging to the coterie of the golden birds of fashion, and those attached to the unfeathered clans of simplicity—given to certain recumbent flags, the name "fashionable;" but even the opposite side of the ancient high road has been valued in a scale of unknown ownership, and baptzied in modern times, "four-and-sixpenny," and "two-and-sixpenny sides:" The former is the West, and the latter the East promenade; and on the pave of the former, when the sun draws out the dramatic pictures of the day, may be seen all that is rich in appearance, rare in the stock of a French importer—beautiful in the keen eye of an amateur—costly in the bills of the tricky merchant—essential on the crowded pate of a new comer from the land of curling macaroni—non-essential on the cumbered lip of our native apes—ostentatious on the native brows of beauty, too often disfigured by foreign additions—superfluous on the heads of large boys whose skulls inane, show to the world that, with them, intellect and hair are local synonims—and moreover, all that remains unpaid for, at the end of one year—perhaps two—some say, three—and rumour whispers, for ever.

On the East side of the great thoroughfare there are generally seen, at the time alluded to, but few passengers, and these mainly of the plain habiliments which have been paid and receipted for; who seem to think the road to business or to heaven is not pointed out by fashion, or any rule or law laid down by her angels, male or female, erect or fallen. On a summer's morning, however, when his majesty with his heated beams seems intent upon blistering the fashionable stones of the western path, the long line of mercantile spirits and mecahnical bodies, the trial and salaried clerks, from the sower of wild oats of eighteen years, to the reaper of tame pleasures at forty; and real estate agents, and other agents, who, according to unsatisfied writs, are of no particular estates real or personal—move down in the cool shadows of the two-and-sixpenny walk. But there are exceptions; and these are the indolent young and middle aged, and perhaps sedentary portion of the community, who prefer being crouded and squeezed in an omnibus rather than benefit their health by a one or two mile walk and exercise; and at whom the whole circle of doctors, quack and quiet, pill makers and venders, lotion sellers, potion prescribers, and all and singular the rank and file of the Medical Society, laugh in their jolly hours, as it aids them in the disposal of sundry plums and drops—dropped from heaven, as they tell the world in the meekness of a Christian's breath.

Well! upon the highest price side of the ornamented avenue, down went the two young Seisers, amid the glare and the streaming lights, that shot from thousands of lamps in the long series of stores, where the countertenders were busy, male and female, with that characteristic politeness that marks the easy manners of the whole class. The streams of people of all ages, even the French sexagenary, and all sexes—and it may be said of all countries in Southern Europe—passed with the dilatory pace that seems a matter of hab-

it, after the toil of the day is done, the appetite of the day is satisfied, and the mind, freed from the agitations of the business whirlpool, finds a moment for silence, or the easy colloquy that passes like a dream.

For more than a mile the same scene was beautiful, with the same living figures that passed, sometimes singly and sometimes in masses; the juvenile forms, loud with that natural gift, the labial whistle; and some almost men in the opinion of others, and more than men in their own, with the frolicsome blood of the teens flowing free, and tongues more freely—unless the latter acted as a finger to keep a Spanish segar stationary—young girls, whose waking dreams were all of the mild gardens of girlhood; and elder ones, whose dreams presented newer faces with other smiles than childhood met, that twined with hopes to which the child had been a stranger. And on the pilgrims passed, by the bright lights and brighter smiles, and soft tones, and friendship's whispers; while the mid-pavement groaned with the rumbling of the rapid wheels, and the hard tramp of the laborious horses; and the shouts of the animals who drove hard, with the aid of a whip whose sharp crack was frequent in the evening wind.

"I'll tell you what," said Augustus to Edward Seiser—after lighting the segar, that cost him more than the bread he consumed in three days—"if the old rat had offered me one hundred dollars, I'd have taken him up instantly; I want a hundred most devoutly."

"I should not," observed Edward, "had he offered two hundred."

"Oh! but, my friend, you may not want—now I do; I'm a damn'd expensive fellow, that 's as true as daylight; I owe, and must pay. Why, you 've no idea what it costs me for these," said Augustus, holding out his segar—"great—try one?" "No." "Well, I never counted the number I consumed, lest the aggregate at the end of a week blistered my mouth; and then, you know, I couldn't smoke, and as a consequence I'd be miserable."

"You might easily modify the habit; reduce the daily number consumed one third; subsequently one half; afterwards be content with a quarter of the present number burned—and then—

"Stop," interrupted Augustus, "don't go on: I've been on that race-course; couldn't run—habit distanced me—and why should I cast another stake on the same trial? no, my dear sir, some men were made for burning tobacco—I'm predestined—"

"But not to keep a mouthful always," said Edward.

"Not to feed on 'em you mean—thank you: no, nor do I; but I have a glorious relish in burning these expensive rascals: I've sat and gazed upon the smoke, winding up to the ceiling, and spreading like the opening of a blue umbrella, and then, coursing out of that fancied shape, disappear like a cloud in a dream.

"And what were you thinking of?" asked Edward.

"Nothing," returned the other; "bless your soul, my friend, thinking would have spoiled the whole pleasure."

"Undoubtedly," said Edward; "the indulgence of idle habits is always adverse to any improvement of the mind; and for that very reason you might break your expensive habit, and give the mind some chance to gain what it has lost by neglect."

"It's a dead loss," observed Agustus; "study is a dry blank to me, and when put in the scale against an exciting game of poule, the weight is all on one side: and there's my billard bill—I only pay half—the other is chalk'd; but its tremendous—and my tailor's too, which is always in my view a vulture's. I'll write to Seiser to send a hundred, and I'll release all Great Britain to him and his."

"It's strange," said Edward; "why, on a salary of four hundred dollars, I've saved one-fourth every year."

"No!" said his companion, looking aghast. "Why, my friend, my poule bill would swamp that, without paying arrears; and what these amount to, I never take the trouble to look; I've no curiosity in that way. How in the name of heaven can you save anything out of four hundred? come, give "us" a lesson in economy; for to me it will be a new novel, by Poor Richard!"

"It's very easily told," said Edward: "the board bill of a respectable house is one hundred and fifty; the wardrobe of a plain man one hundred; and the loose change to pay for et ceteras, fifty more; that's the story, short certainly—but to practice on the theory is considered a thing of wisdom—but recollect, I allow nothing for the elegance of poule and billiards; the brilliancy of the fair sex; or the spirited drive of a fast trotter to Harlæm; or the bottle of wine that only injures the drinker at dinner."

"Well, curse me, if you an't a philosopher; that is, on a small scale," said Augustus.

"Certainly," answered his friend, "but the scale enlarges rapidly; he who saves in small coin, will soon be able to gaze upon a guinea: if you could see in one heap all the "light browns" and "imperials" that you have smoked, and all the coin they cost in another, wouldn't they set your mind to thinking deeply?"

"No," returned the other; "a man don't like to gaze on the back road of folly; but, bless your soul, you don't know the excitement of a game; after a two dollar dinner at Bilks', and the destruction of half a dozen im-

perials—there I go in the room—"just in time, Gus, says Dr. Sour; take the last ball, my Seiser, and come in;" down goes my dollar, two efforts on my part to "kill"—that is in the poule sense—the antecedent number finds me dead—in the same sense; in other words, my money is gone: I'm rubbed out; that's mere flatness, milk and water; afterwards comes the spirit—you buy another ball; and then the players being lessened in number, the thing gets interesting; off coat, and be cautious; bet heavy but keep cool: it wants nerves even to win a dollar or lose one, in a proper manner—gentesly, and without regret; and to be able to laugh in either case.

"I thought the winner was the sinner to laugh in all cases," observed Edward.

"Not so," said the enthusiastic lover of billiards, "no: the philosopher will laugh in both cases; what is the use of tears? they are drops for the child in years and feeling; not for a man of spirit. The heart is a tender gift in youth; but the world hardens it; it become an impervious case; that which continues in it might now and then evince itself in a tear; but pride seals up the channels, and the world calls it firmness!"

"Certainly," said Edward, "but would not firmness be more commendable in a successful resistance to the passion for play?"

"As true as daylight," observed his companion; "but then what would life be? its excitement, its hunger for novelty, its thirst for an active current? it would be nothing; some men would rather clamber on the tread-mill all day, than have the reputation of the statue of Washington, and remain inactive."

"And don't you know that activity at billiards," said Edward, "is frequently a prelude to continued exercise on the tread-mill?"

"Yes, my dear sir, among the vulgar," said Augustus; "the animal will strike for the thing, the coin, the stake: I strike for the mental relish, the pleasure of the pending chance, the undetermined condition of the game, the unwon contents of the poule: I laugh in victory or defeat. Look at the great Seiser, rich without doubt in superabundance; his glory is to achieve a conquest in commerce, in speculation, in business. He may not feel a loss or a gain; but he is for money, not for the honest gain to enable him to live, even luxuriously; but the unwonted excess, that feeds ambition, and brings the name and reputation of a millionaire; all this is avarice—gambling;—is not such a man a devil compared to me? and society worships him! and he worships gold, and weighs it in an unseen balance, even while murmuring a prayer in the seat of a church!"

"I only regret," said Edward, "that one who understands things so well, seems so absorbed by a practice that must injure purse, health and constitution."

"Well—have your own way," returned Augustus; "I can't convince you of the glories of an evening's excitement, and the grandness of a scene where you are the principal actor, and gain the palm, or smoke over defeat"—

"And principal sufferer at times, and loser at all times," observed Mr. Edward.

"Ha! you are determined to be unconvinced of the great and spirited effect of a contest at hazard. Well, amen, I hear the click of the deep red ball now. You won't go, I suppose?"

"No, excuse me; I am engaged in a scarce less excitable pleasure—a social circle at home," observed Edward—"so good night."

"Good night," returned his companion; "but let me hear from you, if anything transpires in regard to the great Seiser; I've a devilish strong notion to play an off-and-on game with him, and demand two hundred; take one, if the worst comes to the worst, and face him with an impudence equal to a compeer: however, we'll see—adieu, since you won't step up."

The two parted; the equal-minded, economical young clerk to seek his lodgings, enter in the social talk of his fellow-boarders, or look over the book that may have been obtained to improve the mind during leisure hours, and retire at such an hour as health requires, unchequered by the various and noisy scenes that fill up the nightly idleness of "bloods," "choice spirits," and others, the dashing and genteel gentlemen—so called, it is presumed, from external appearance; as in the opinion of many just and thinking men, such aspiring youth generally want all those becoming traits of character that are essential to one who claims the reputation of a gentleman, and which are of far more importance than the mere name.

Not at home, however, did Mr. Augustus Seiser go, although he ascended to a room, where men like himself felt at home. There were married men and single men, of various ages, clerks and professional gentlemen, including some of the readers of Blackstone and Story, whose legal stories were all forgotten, in practising upon the decisions of Hoyle, whose essays on "games" entitled him to a home for life in a Penitentiary, where, upon a diet of bread and water, he might have found plenty of leisure to prepare subsequent editions of his great work, intended to work the ruin of those who are generally ill-disposed to work at all.

"Gus, my chum, where the devil have you stayed? the deep red has been blushing for your absence all the evening," said Tom Quil, with a loud laugh at his own smartness.

"Been on business," said Augustus; "how do you feel, Tommy?"

"In want of a couple of dollars," returned Tom, "unless I win this poule."

"Always in want," said Augustus, "when everybody is cleaned out; that's a prime stroke for a cross, the angle's as true as daylight."

"Rather difficult to make, I think, Sir," said a young gentleman, in new clothes, and quite prim in personal appearance.

"No, not for a good eye and steady hand, with a cue of eighteen ounces and round point," said Augustus Seiser, with the eye of a keen player.

"Missed it, by damn!" said Tom; "life in a miss! there was a fly on the ball; but it required a quantity of luck to hole that deep red sinner."

"What luck in buying to-night, Sammy?" said Seiser to a large man in spectacles."

"Same as usual," said the large man; "infernal luck: lost every poule. I must be getting nervous. Here, Bug," said the long man to the marker of the game, "give me a gin dram and a couple of segars."

So went on the glorious sport of this small company of gamblers; fifty cents after fifty cents, dollar after dollar, were put down, and struggled for amid laugh, and joke, and jeer, and junketing. There were married men at the table, unblushingly venturing part of their small means: not with the expectation of winning much money, for the keeper of the room was invariably in possession of the lion's share at the termination of the evening's amusement; but to pass away time. or kill it, as it is termed; and thereby indulge in a habit, expensive, dangerous and low in the extreme.

There might have been seen men like Mr. Augustus Seiser, who felt no rebuke when a few dollars were lost at the table, although these same men would be indebted even to their boot-black, whose patient forbearance and pauper-like solicitation for the small balance due for labor, would be met with a frown upon the brow, and the indignant shake of the unfurnished head.

And there were boys, not yet arrived at their majority, with the important look and spirit of fashionable men, well dressed, and with change in their pockets, who were tolerated and encouraged, as long as their money encouraged the game; men on a small salary and a larger one, all excited with brandy and beer, deemed requisite to balance the thirsty state of their organs, exhausted by continual smoking. On the benches were acquaintances or friends of several of the parties, who might be styled the silent partners of some of the players, and who gained or lost, as turned the scale in the progress of the game. Some Frenchmen might be seen on the seats watching with anxiety the roll of the balls, and the good or ill luck of the venturesome spirits, with no interest at all in the stakes, but simply amateurs, admiring a successful issue, or whispering of some error in judgment, according to their opinion, but audibly saying nothing. These men, although from sixty to seventy years of age, were as enthusiastic as the most juvenile. One would have supposed that at their time of life home would be the only place of rational comfort; but Frenchmen are a singular race of this world's great aggregate; and early habits seem to endure, until the head is whitened and the limbs are infirm; and it may be, that such as these, who can no longer afford to be made the victims of vice, are still entertained by observing performances that fixed themselves deeply rooted in their minds and early practices.

Then on the same benches were some jovial acquaintances of some of the players, who had gambled away all the money they could command, and being clad in suits somewhat rusty and worn, although of fashionable appearance, or rather appearance only one season removed from the ton, could neither borrow of acquaintances nor get credit with the keeper of the room. These young men, when forced from the active circle, lingered on the benches, giving their opinion to the old Frenchmen, smoking an odd segar begged from a player, and sipping brandy or port wine mixtures whenever asked to drink; and never refusing, being cautioned, by the state of their own funds, never to decline a liberal offer. It made no difference whether the dram were wanted or not; they wished to accommodate the landlord, and besides get partially intoxicated; and so keep up a false excitement, after none could be derived from their own funds; and subsequently stagger home, or to some bawdy-house for lodgment.

These latter characters had seen better days; had been on large salaries, and equal in all points of view with Mr. Augustus Seiser and his peers at the table; and at first wore a gold patent lever, attached to a gold chain, and large rings, and sundry baubles that deck the well-dressed, so called; that is, the genteel man, whose limbs are made models by modern tailors. They played with spirit, and dissipated nightly the coin that should have paid honest debts; they over-spent the annual allowance derived from business, or the sacred store of a parent, or the devise of some relative realized too early; full of fashion and excitement, they forgot that the fund must be large that is inexhaustible, and soon became in want of the money previously wasted; lost employment and reputation at the same time, and the time, too, most inauspicious for a genteel young man to borrow money. Having day and night without aught to engage their attention, they naturally made a sort of home of the scene of their earliest folly, but soon found that without money

such a home was barren. Finally, if not sunk into the practices of some lower hell, they still visited the old billiard-room, to linger on the seats, talk of gentility, and drown reflection in the eleemosenary libations of former associates who still dressed well, expended money, made a show, and paid, or partly paid, their way; but who, from the same causes, must sink as had others, and become the tolerated shadows of former independent and well-dressed forms.

None that ever went down the delightful hill, and found the bottom when not anticipated, experienced the least molestation from the laws or the guardians of the law. No example is remembered where either parental or municipal authority interfered with the nightly gambling in such places, although well known to many in authority, and those whose authority, if exercised, would have saved more than one whose course was downward, and continued so. The guardians of night might be silenced by reward, and be induced to overlook the excesses of respectable young men; and even those in higher authority might deem their burdens too heavy, to superadd that of breaking up the billiard saloons, where all are invited to play the elegant game for exercise.

Exercise is the ostensible object that lures the many; pleasure steps in and invites a continuance of visits, and habit then introduces the spirit of gambling, whose power is stronger than the love of the human heart; and then commences the long and thorny road, that furnishes its by-spots for drinking and petty larceny, and cheating and falsehood, and chambers of sickness and poverty, and utter deprivation, and lingering disease of the mind, whose pains are acute, and rankle while life is, sane or insane: and then comes the death-bed of a villain, with its awful foreshadowings of hell; and then death, and its pauper grave, where the youth that was the child of a sunny time of infancy, lingers and rots with the same epitaph the community would place over the despised grave of a very brute.

The game continued as before observed, with many a hilaritable laugh; and, indeed, it seemed as if all the members of the playful circle were as light of heart as Mr. Augustus Seiser; for, win or lose, the jocund mirth prevailed with the individual members, though many had no reason to indulge after that manner. Time passed on, with all its incidents of drinking and smoking, and losing and joking, until the morning hour saw most of the customers deprived of their monetary store, and somewhat exhausted, with a lassitude that follows close upon excesses; and then the lights were extinguished, and the company departed to renew on the next evening the exercises so alluring to the young, and destructive withal.

As Mr. Augustus Seiser emerged from the street wherein this saloon was situated, and took up his homeward march on the now silent pavement of one of the main streets leading to the lower part of the city, he was touched on the shoulder by an acquaintance, who, in the most pleasant manner imaginable, exclaimed, without stopping:

"Early, early, Sir; nothing like regular hours, Mr. Seiser; great advantages in early retiring"—

"Very great, Mr. Porker," said Augustus, smiling; "and you are in a situation to share them."

"It so happened to-night," returned Mr. Porker; "but it's impossible, at all times, to retire according to habit and inclination."

"So I find it," said Augustus; "I never retire earlier than this; to tell you the truth, I must have exactly so much excitement during an evening, or get no sleep—it's a fact."

"No doubt of it—all habit; bless my stars, now I'll be bound that you don't rise in the morning before eight o'clock, or thereabouts," said Mr. Porker.

"Half past nine, Sir," observed Augustus; "breakfast then, business at ten; and like a mill-horse all day, blinded to everything but business."

"Just my way, except that I begin earlier," said Mr. Porker. "You know the tremendous business we do, and consequently what my duties are."

"I suppose they must be harassing," said Augustus.

"You have no just estimation of 'em," said Porker; "my duties, if every thing were not perfectly systematized, I never would get through. Let me tell you, sir, that our firm is wholly unapproached by the common run of firms; what, with our foreign and domestic business, stock and agencies, note and exchange accounts, we do a tremendous business: our cash partner, sir, is a wonder—a financial giant."

"So I've heard, Mr. Porker, and a speculating one, too, as rich as a Jew, and as smiling as an infant," said Augustus.

"Ah, ha! very good," said Mr. Porker, "very good; being the confidential clerk, I take part of the hit."

And here the two laughing citizens parted for the night. Mr. Thomas Porker actually enjoyed the high situation of confidential clerk to the celebrated firm of Grasp, Gripe, Grip and Seiser; and not contented therewith, he had the pleasure to inform all his acquaintances of the fact, and seemed to glory in the same, as if he were part and parcel of that well-known firm. Whenever he spoke of the firm, he used the words "we, our, us," as if, indeed, his capital made an integral part of the partnership chattels, lands and tenements.

An enthusiastic admirer of the cash partner, Mr. Seiser, and the stock partner, Mr. Grasp, Mr. Porker was loud in their praise; and if they were the least disinclined to blow the trumpet of their own fame, they found a most willing blower in the good-humored and garrulous chief clerk. The firm never wanted for a defender, or one to assert the loftiness of their standing—Mr. Porker being always heard to magnify their dealings in the manner of an interested individual—thus: "our exchanges to-day nearly beggared the market"—"Sir, I assure you, we swept the foreign market before three, clean"—"The whole cotton market depended upon us; our paper swallowed the samples at the minimum rates; I assure you it did." And happy was Mr. Porker when making such remarks; and polite and affable, too; and he seemed a princely clerk in his own two eyes, and in his employers' eight.

If transactions were had with the overshadowing firm, and the unfortunate understanding of Mr. Porker could not comprehend the entire scope thereof, he would sit pondering for a long time, and finally throw down his pen, as if he despaired of ever grasping sufficient reach of thought to enable him to see through the mill-stone with which the great firm was endeavoring to grind a customer at the time; and then he would turn a little pale, and mutter soliloquisingly, "what a genius that cash partner is!" When a set of exchange did not yield the regular profit, viz: "four per cent. per month"—which he, the confidential clerk, and the channel through whom everybody could learn that the firm was as firm as a rock, had anticipated, he would fall into a deep train of moneyal reflections, and dash down his pen, and whisper to the air of the counting-room—"cheap, too cheap; four per cent. a month is a Christianly commission! and why deal in exchanges that yield nothing?"

There was a trait in the character of Mr. Porker, enthusiastic as he always was, well worthy the special imitation of all the bank-servants, and rheumatic Cashiers, and gouty Presidents, and others, the counter-tenders and tellers, whether in a bank, or an office, or the tremendous shops filled with calico and cloth—it was civility. Mr. Porker was affable and civil to all; he never left his politeness and civility behind, because then he would appear but an *animal*, and like those men whose vast importance commences at ten A. M. and expires at three P. M., and endures during business hours.

The confidential clerk was gentlemanly to all, no matter what the garb of the customer, or how slight soever his business; reasoning that civility was due alike to the rich and the poor, the scavenger or the director of a bank; and that once upon a time he, the clerk, had dealt with a director of a bank who had been a scavenger: and this man was entitled to courtesy in the sand-bank line, as well as when he got in the rag-bank line—and Mr. Porker had shown to him politeness, in accordance with his own notions of right and wrong.

The politeness of Mr. Porker, unimpeachable in business transactions, as before stated, rose higher in point of etiquette when he got in contact with the fair sex. A single example will illustrate his punctilious endeavors to appreciate the enduring suavity of the fair; and its occurrence transpired when he reached his lodgings, and finding no night-key in his pocket, was forced to ring for admission. The door of the house was opened by his landlady, who admitted him.

"Bless me, Mrs. Pig," said Porker, with a smile, "have I troubled *you?*"

"No, Mr. Porker; no trouble," said the pretty Mrs. Pig.

"May I apologize?" said Porker, bowing and blushing.

"It's not worth while," said Mrs. Pig, with a smile.

"I have troubled you," said Mr. Porker, with truth.

"Oh, not at all," said Mrs. Pig, with great suavity.

"I must apologize," said Mr. Porker, bending very low.

"By no means," ejaculated the prim Mrs. Pig.

"I know I've disturbed you," said Mr. Porker.

"You may depend—it's nothing," observed Mrs. Pig.

"How came I to trouble you, and so late at night?" said Mr. Porker, despondingly.

"Oh, it's nothing, Mr. Porker," put in Mrs. Pig.

"A thousand apologies, if I have troubled you," observed Mr. Porker, standing his ground, and determined to be considered an intruder in his own lodging house once in his life.

"But, Mrs. Pig," observed Mr. Porker, with a low bow, and the chaste smile of a gentleman who wishes to borrow money, "when you hear how many and various letters I have to indite to Boots and Blubber, Bankers, London; Potato, Brothers, Edinburgh; Pin et Allez, Rue de Ristan, Paris, you will not wonder that my night-key slips my attention sometimes, which gives me the necessity to look for the key of your kindness, and that I have troubled now."

Mr. Porker then bowed his final bend, and Mrs. Pig smiled as a prim little landlady should have done, and all her several smiles clung to the gentleman's memory, until sleep veiled them with its gentle fingers.

CHAPTER IX.

The story progresses — but is interrupted by company.

"Fifty dollars," said Captain John, the evening after his visit to the great house, and while sitting with the family. "Well, fifty; I suppose you all vote for receiving it."

"In course," said Mrs. Seiser; "fifty dollars an't to be sneezed at now-a-days."

"No," said Angelica Seiser, "nor any other days; nor any other nights neither; bless me, I guess not! Why, how long would I have to sew on these garments before I'd git fifty dollars, Madam Pump?"

"Oh! much long time, ma chere," said Madam.

"Yes, long time indeed," rejoined Angelica. "I declare, what sneaking fellers they are; only to give two shillings for making these garments; and two is a hard day's work; they ought to be choked."

"Why don't you remonstrate?" said the Captain, "and tell 'em plainly that they are acting cruel towards the industrious. May I dive deep, but I'd feel inclined to choke such scoundrels."

"I have," said Angelica. "I told him, Mr. Screw, says I, now it's worth more, says I, to make these up; only think, says I, how much labor and pains I put on, says I, and all for two shillings; and says he to me, says he, Miss Seiser, we could get 'em done for less, I assure you, says he. People call every day for 'em, says he, and would be glad to make 'em for less, says he; but we prefer you at a higher rate. But, Mr. Screw, says I, it's hard; indeed, you don't know how abominable hard it is to keep a decent appearance, says I, and work so cheap; it's only killing a body."

"And he lives in fine style," said the Captain; "and perhaps shows a polish in house and furniture, in order to appear something higher than a slop-seller."

"Oh, bless me!" said Angelica, "he would feel insulted if you called him slop-seller. I told him very plainly, says I, Mr. Screw, when I can get work elsewhere, I do declare, says I, I must take it, if I can get better paid, says I; and all work, Mr. Screw, is a matter of necessity with me; so, says I, wherever they pay best I must go: there's no danger, however, of better pay," added the single lady.

"It's a curious circumstance," said the Captain, "in this world's movements, or rather in the movements of its society, that the most laborious get the least rewarded for their labor. Now there is a man who considers it a matter of nice calculation and business discernment, to pinch the poor by every means; to lower the rate of wages; draw from the frugal the utmost of labor for the lowest price; and to smile at acts of his own injustice, that really amount to a crime; and all for what? that he may, hour after hour, day after day, and year after year, accumulate by minute particles the unblest gain, until the heap instructs the world to call him rich. Could such a man see at one glance the full amount of misery experienced by those who are the victims of such avarice, it appears to me it would shake his own faith in his own saneness. Did he judge another guilty of such acts, his judgment would fall upon that other without stint or mercy: but himself being the perpetrator, he lives on plenty, and indulges in pleasures, unthinkingly, and with a heart as cold as adamant."

Men who lavish on the visiter within their doors a bottle of wine of the cost of several dollars, will banter the common wood-heaver for a reduction of the miserable pittance he may earn in the storm with the strength of a Hercules. Is it not strange that those who do err, should not err on the side of morality, so that charity might step in, and save them from the heavy expiation that must fall upon the inhuman? When such men go down, as is often the case, the scale of misfortune, until they reach the spot where the wood-heaver was, a thing despised and gazed upon as a curiosity, what can prevent them from recurring to former moments of unjust neglect and positive avarice, and feeling that their hearts are diseased?

"So," continued the Captain, "you think it advisable to take the offer of the great man, ladies?"

"I raially think, Captain," returned Mrs. Seiser, "that provided you know nothing against it, the money would be of more use here than in his pockets."

"There can be no doubt of that," answered the Captain; "I must make some few inquiries, however, before we finally agree and determine; but what is your opinion, Madam La Pump?"

"I would take de monies, Capetan," said Madam, "the first offer alway de bettair sair."

"Why," said the Captain, "that may be in matrimony, but in other cases the rule is not always the best: now there is Mr. Augustus Seiser, the particular gentleman in white gloves, he will take any offer; he will catch at it like tinder, because he must have money to pay for pleasure; and he don't take the trouble to look beyond, to ascertain the promise of the prospective; but the younger man, Edward, is not so; he looks before he leaps, and don't leap if the road is not clear."

"He is very nice young man, and sociable," said Madam.

"Wery," said Angelica, "I didn't like that

fellow with huge whiskers, and wimen's gloves: he appeared so cold, and so much like a man made by the barber."

"And by the tailor," said the Captain; "for all know that a tailor is a great man to swell small men. Why what," continued the Captain, "is on your dog's tail, Madam? it's as black as a thundergust."

"Ah, mon Dieu," exclaimed Madam; "vot is dis? Nappo vot did dey do to him? poor Nappo."

"Why its ink; here, Wash., who turned the inkstand on that poor fellow's tail? may I dive deep," said the Captain, "if it an't soaked in ink."

"I didn't do it, mommy," cried the boy Washington.

"Nor I, nurther," put in Benjamin; "the inkstand felled on his tail."

"And that's been the reason of your giggling all this time; never mind," said Mrs. Seiser, shaking her widowed head and forefinger.

"Ah, me! he is ruin; poor Nappo," said Madam La Pump, shedding a half dozen tears—perhaps of surprise—"vot vill take 'im out, Capetan?"

"To tell you the truth, Madam, I don't know what to recommend; acid is generally used to extract ink; but the wool on a dog's tail may be more difficult to whiten than other wool; upon second thought, Madam, cut the wool off," said Captain John.

"Oh! 'orreble, Capetan," said Madam—and a few more tears dropped unnoticed.

"Well, could you endure to see the tail cut off?" said the Captain, seriously.

"Oh, in course not," said Mrs. Seiser—

"You'll horrify Madam La Pump," said Angelica.

"Oh, cruel, cruel, Capetan!" shrieked Madam La Pump—"too 'orreble!" and here that lady shuddered and shed more tears. What! cut off the tail of her lap-dog? as white as the mountain snow—as playful as the pennant in the wind, as small as that of a pet lamb—to wound him, aye, maim him—horrible! the thought was tearful; the act would be murder in the extremity.

"Well, I don't know," said the Captain, "any thing better than to clip off the wool; it will grow out again as white as wool ought to grow; besides, it will curl handsomely, and in fact be an ornament."

The entrance of Tom Scrape suspended for a time the topic; but it was soon renewed, as the little French lady appealed to the knowledge of Tom, in regard to the extraction of ink from the premises, so unexpectedly dyed in mourning.

"Why, mam," observed Tom, "you might git it out with a little oil of vitr'ol; but that would make the poor feller cry out in doleful tones. You better shear off the wool, mam: Captin, we done our black dog so once when his tail was tarred. That dog was a cunnin' chap; he cum up out of the market once with four crabs hanging to his tail."

"From the market, Tom?" asked the Captain.

"Yes, I s'pose he let his tail down in the basket, and feeling the claws of the crabs, drew up, like a fisher, and scud home with his load."

"Do you railly b'lieve, Tom, that he stole 'em?" asked Mrs. Seiser, laughing heartily with the company.

"Why, mam," observed Tom, "if 'coons 'ill crab with their tail ends, vy not a dog?"

A tap at the small door was attended to, and Mr. and Mrs. Slapnumbers made their appearance. The new married couple were frequent visitors, and very lively ones too; which may be accounted for by the fact that they were just passing around the silvery circle of the honey moon.

"Dear, dear," said Miss Angelica, "what an age it is since you've been here; but I s'pose Mr. S. has kept you home." Then Mrs. Slapnumbers kissed Miss Angelica for saying so, and then saluted Madam La Pump, and then the boys, and finally Mrs. Seiser—and then she laughed until the tears came.

"I keep her home!" exclaimed Mr. Slapnumbers; "why, Captain, she won't let me go out."

"Oh, forever," said his wife, "now if that don't—oh, you Slappy—what an awful fib!"

"You must expect," said the Captain to Mr. Slapnumbers, "to be rubbed by the ladies."

"I've no objections, said Mr. Slapnumbers; "but it's rather rough to have a curry-comb rub, and my wife is sometimes severe."

Now it was his turn to laugh, and he did so, with all the pleasure of a full heart, and in so loud a manner as to out-sound all competing voices. The smaller the saying, or fun, that drew out the laughter of Mr. Slapnumbers, the louder did his laughter break forth; as if he alone could discover wit in his own stories, and become joyous, while others might be solemn. Mr. Scrape, who sat in the back ground, joined in the laugh, but the leading thought that induced his mirth was the idea of a new married man and a tailor being curried down with a comb—he, Mr. Scrape, having recently endeavored to rub down his spavined horse, but had to cease, as the noble animal kicked with all the power of a clam steed, and as if it had joined the order of Odd Horses, and become independent.

"Oh! let me tell you while I think of it," said Angelica to Mrs. Slapnumbers—"I saw Miss B. as you desired, and I told her that you expected a bride visit; and says she to me, Miss Seiser, never can I condescend

to demean myself so much as to visit Sally Ann. Remember, said she, I was passed over and not invited to the wedding. And, says I, my dear Miss B. do listen; it was a mistake of Mr. Slapnumbers' book-keeper; he didn't deliver the card, says I, and I know it."

"I'll take my oath of it," said Mr. Slapnumbers, very importantly.

"My dear, don't be agitated," said his wife.

"I will, my dear," said he; "that is, Mrs. Seiser, I think I ought."

"No, Mr. Slapnumbers," observed the old lady, "not for misunderstandings, only misrespects."

"Exactly," said Mr. Slapnumbers, "it does take age to curb the young and sanguine."

Mr. Slapnumbers drew forth his pocket-handkerchief, and snapped it several times, then wiped his lips with it; and attempted to kiss his wife, and appeared like the jolliest spirit that ever entered into the temple where Cupid resides in all weathers, in summer and in winter, without raiment in the first, and without a great coat in the last chilly season —which shows that the little fellow must be very tough: and no doubt some people, like the happy Mr. Slapnumbers, sometimes find him so.

The Captain enjoyed the traits in the exhibition as well as the laughter they occasioned—leaving the parties to such course of conversation as seemed to them most conducive to mirth or melancholy.

"Well, Angelica," said Mrs. Slapnumbers, "you'll agree with me that Miss B. was omitted by mistake; it's a pity, I think, that there's no allowance to be made for mistakes on such tender occasions as weddings."

"Yes," observed the Captain, drily, "when both parties get so horribly mistaken sometimes."

"Jist our case," said Mr. Slapnumbers, misconstruing the Captain's remarks; "we both were mistaken in supposin' that Miss B. was invited."

"I know the reason of her sourness," said Angelica—"a new dress was sent to her, besides the flowers sent by Madam, at the same time."

"Beautiful," uttered Madam, "all like de bride's."

"Like mine!" said Mrs. Slapnumbers. "Slappy, my dear, do you hear? like mine! well, well, some people's assurableness is outrageous—poor Miss B.!"

"It don't astonish me, Mrs. Slapnumbers; no, no, my dear, it don't astonish me; people who can't demean 'emselves for us can't astonish me," said Mr. Slapnumbers, shaking his head.

"'Specially as I told 'er, it was a mistake of the book-keeper," observed Angelica.

"Decidedly," said Mr. Slapnumbers, with as much importance as if he had had a genuine scholar to foot up columns in the daily blotter; "but, my dear, I repeat, before the whole company, Miss B. don't astonish me; you was once a little jealous of Miss B., I recollect; there's the key to unlock the secret."

"You Slappy!" said Mrs. Slapnumbers; and that's all she did say; but her face was buried in her handkerchief, and she used the sharp salts until the tears moistened her invisible eyes.

How agreeable to such a man as Mr. Slapnumbers is the small talk of vanity! How happy does such an one appear; and how important it makes him feel, to be able to tell a whole company that he has a golden toy at home, which, unseen by his auditors, and unproduced for examination, is but a gilded counterfeit! The simple story-teller, like Mr. Slapnumbers, wishing to impress upon the minds of others the fact that he has something very extraordinary, goes on to magnify the hidden treasure until, perhaps, some inquisitive wag exposes the hollowness of the thing, and then the coxcombry of the relator becomes visible, and he sinks with silly looks, and an endeavor to whistle without success. Two or three words from Mr. Thomas Scrape, would have reduced the great Mr. Slapnumbers to the position of a silly story-teller, and a vain boaster; but Mr. Scrape merely laughed in silence at the name Book-keeper, and spared a new married man, rioting in the indulgence of vanity.

There is no end to vanity, thought Tom; even Lawyer Jim thinks he's a handsome fellow when sober; and in truth so he would be, but the carbuncles on his portrait are unnatural spots, and only exhibited by the deformed, transformed by gin. Even St. Barts esteems his pair of whiskers, and greases 'em with salt pork fat, to make 'em shine in the sun; though he don't comb his hair but once during the run of the moon. There's no end to vanity, Tom continued to think, because an oysterer will brag of a blind horse, bought for thirty shillings, and standing in second-hand shoes.

The book-keeper named by Mr. Slapnumbers, was that useful man known to the tailors by the name of "busheller," who patches and mends old garments, and then chalks all the charges on a slate, that being the daily blotter of the shop. Mr. Slapnumbers' vanity had turned his stitcher into a book-keeper; and it garnished his stories, which sometimes run into great length, and were wound up by a declaration, that the charges were like those of a surgeon, and in this wise:

Sewing up Lawyer Jim's left leg, one shilling.

Mending Sandy's calf, nine pence.

Stitching back of Poony's 'prentice, six pence.

Elbow on Tom Snout, four pence.

Half-bottom on St. Barts, three pence.

Waist on Loony O'Lobb, six pence.

Right leg for old Snorter—2 foot 2—three and three.

Shoulder and sleeve for Mr. McNoddy, to be traded out in imported boil, two and six.

Such were the entries made on the old slate, by the Hibernian busheller of Mr. Slapnumbers, who had read it to Mr. Scrape, after the latter had paid a dime for having "his breast stitched up"

"For my part," said Mrs. Seiser, in an advisory manner, "I wouldn't notice the thing any further, but let it drop as it is; as quarrelling with Miss B would be unbecoming, and not at all suitable for young married people, either home or abroad."

And Madam La Pump nodded and smiled, as much as to say that would be her course if she were married; and then a slight melancholy passed over her face, which no reader could see, nor other person not encumbered with spectacles like Mrs. Seiser's "No. 2 concave patent;" and that melancholy arose when Madam La Pump thought she was not married; and the melancholy deepened when she thought she never should be: the last thought parted from Madam La Pump, and true as a truism, over it went to Miss Angelica Seiser, who thought precisely similar as Madam La Pump; and, moreover, the Angel thought that the men were singular beings, and gloried in leaving young maidens alone—thereby torturing the fair sex to show that they, the former, lived in a land of independence—and she wound up with the spiteful and frightful words "dirty fellers!"

The door was opened at this time by one of the boys, who had heard a gentle knock, and Mr. and Mrs. McNoddy came in with respectful though silent salutations, after the manner of genteel society. They did not smile; but each wore that serious aspect which plainly indicates that a certain something casts a coldness over mind and manners. A grief was somewhere, not to be reached by the poor man's plaster nor the rich man's pill; no! a mental grief, sometimes known by the name of misunderstanding, which must be modified, reduced, or exterminated only by long talks, sometimes administered in violent doses, which, on being repeated, get milder in tone, and sometimes dwindle down from boiling hot to comfortably cool—the great singularity in all such cases being the fact that each afflicted party administers to the other without the aid of a regular physician; which gave rise to the whisper among some people that no one ever died of the doses, and that it was owing entirely to the absence of the M. D.'s of the steam, mineral, or vegetable clans.

"Now," thought the Captain, "is there to be war? it don't look like peace; there's a cloud on the brow of Mr. McNoddy, and its shadow is on the brow of his lady; they have been boiling over for some time with heated grief—very bad and troublesome if not allowed to evaporate. How calm, and yet how full the subterranean negotiator looks! like a political orator before his torrent is heard, and its stream interrupted by the shout of the elegant auditors he is leading by the nose, defining his position; like a lecturer before the thunder is heard, to make up in sound the melancholy deficiency of sense. Now, if I can turn the thoughts of McNoddy another way, I may sustain the amicable quietude of the present moment. I'll try it—and may I dive deep if I don't succeed!"

"By-the-by," said the Captain, in earnest, "Mr. McNoddy, how is this election to terminate?"

"'Pon my honor, I can't ixactly say; but I tink the hard-shillers 'll cum up wid a majority."

"Too be sure," said Tom Scrape, "an't that settled? How could the monopoliars git ahead of the perfession?"

"What?—allow me the question"—said Mr. Slapnumbers, "what profession is on the board—that is, in question?"

"Why, the shell and scale line, too be sure," said Tom.

"Bless my soul!" returned Mr. Slapnumbers, "have I lived twenty-six years"——

"Oh dear! only twenty-four," said his wife, interrupting him.

"Twenty-four, truly," continued Mr. Slapnumbers; "only two years older than you, my dear."

"Oh you horrible feller!" said his wife.

"Oh shame, Mr. Slapnumbers, to talk of ages!" said Angelica.

"Mon Dieu!" said Madam, coloring faintly.

"We're all agin you," said Mrs. Seiser.

"Decidedly," said the Captain, "ha, Mr. McNoddy?"

"I always go wid the majority," said McNoddy, and this was literally true; McNoddy was a politician and partizan.

"Well, I beg pardon," said Mr. Slapnumbers, "but I was saying, since I've lived in the world, I never knew a clam-man had a profession."

"Which only proves that a man must live and learn, even after he gets married; and though he got an angel for a wife," said Tom—proud to hit a tailor and compliment his wife.

"Well, I do declare," said Mrs. Slapnumbers, and that was all she did say; but she blushed like crimson blotting-paper, and thought Tom a genteel clammer.

But a moment or two had elapsed, however, before all the blush disappeared; and as sud-

den as the tick of a clock, a paleness spread over the countenance of Mrs. Slapnumbers, who rose up from the seat, exclaiming with natural rapidity:

"Oh, dear! oh, my dear! look! oh!"

"My wife, sir, is fainting," said Mr. Slapnumbers—"I know it—why, my dear!"

"Here, Wash.!" cried the Captain, "water! Angel, your salts!"

Up jumped the company, and all surrounded the new married lady, and applied salts powerfully pungent, and crowded a glass of water in, and was preparing to close closer around her, in order, as is usual in such cases, to make her faint, when the pretty Mrs. Slapnumbers rose up without aid, and indulged in a terrible laughter—loud and then silent; then half uttered, then rising, then sinking; and with all the jovial variety ever detected in the schedule of intense risibility and down through all the well-known stages of grin, grimace, groan and grunt.

Mr. Slapnumbers stood, looking wild, having three or four tears ready for ejection, the moment it became necessary to show a liquid proof of his affection; poor man, he knew not whether to laugh or cry; something he must say—as a husband it became him—he did—

"Captain, my wife is getting mad; bless me!"

"Nonsense," said the Captain, "it's only merriment."

"Bless my soul!" said Mrs. Slapnumbers, recovering, "I didn't faint; oh, my nerves! my poor head! do forgive me, Lord! Lord!" continued the lady, "only to think; it frightened me so!"

"What?" said her husband.

"Why, look," said Mrs. Slapnumbers, "dear, dear; only look, I was horribly frightened, by the black end of that little lap-dog's tail!"

Everybody looked at the tail of the lap-dog, black as the fat blacking of Lee and Thompson marked No. 1; and, oh, horrible! the ink on that tail had spread; and now it was a curiosity; and they all laughed, but Mr. Slapnumbers laughed the most, though very pale from mere fright, and Madam La Pump the least of any, as her dog, or rather the darkest end of him, was the cause of that laughter; and she felt tender, odd, and somewhat abashed. Good nature, however, that first charm in the sex of any age—including that great majority who are of age unknown—predominated: and then she joined the laughers, and shook out a half dozen tears, that hung, like ripe fruit, ready and willing to be shaken.

All these little incidents happened very luckily, the Captain thought; it kept the belligerent Pimpy McNoddy and Mrs. McNoddy in peace and in entertainment; they joined in all the excitement, and laughed well, and apparently very sincerely; and it being late, and there being no prospective chance of bringing their old quarrel with Angelica Seiser on the carpet for discussion, they made the requisite number of bows and went home, and all the company soon followed; and after a while, the little mansion of Mrs. Billington Seiser was a house where silence reigned like a dumb king, untroubled by a breath, except now and then a long-drawn attic snore from the sun-burnt nose of the Water Dog; or the bark of a mongrel, who deemed it only fair play to answer the voice of a fellow-barker, heard across the water, from the distant and silent shores of Long Island.

Cautiously did Pimpy McNoddy and Mrs. McNoddy approach their own home, and actually steal up stairs as quietly as mice in the middle of a mouldy cheese, lest they should wake the small McNoddys: once awakened, the scientific cries of the infants, blended as in one set of pipes, would be heard without doubt, and be continued for a long time, to the plague and dissatisfaction of the philosophic Mr. McNoddy, who was often heard to say their cries were anything but music to him, and everything but what they should be—"the divil burn 'em;" that is, the cries, not the criers.

But Mrs. McNoddy was no such cowardly spirit as to dread the outpouring pipes of the small McNoddys; no, like a prudent good mother, when they commenced, she allowed them to proceed, until they absolutely gave up of their own accord, and lessened their cries into broken murmurs and detached hiccoughs; and afterwards fell asleep owing to the gentle aid of nature. The worthy pair, however, retired without the juvenile pastime, which was as noisy as any domestic concert; nor were they disturbed at all during the whole night, which drew from McNoddy the exclamation the next morning, "wonder of wonders!" and well might he thus exclaim, let it be considered, if only to show how many words may be used to prove that two and two make four!

Here was a merchant, a negotiator, a trader—it is conceded one only in the fragment line—but still, a laboring buyer and vender in the mercantile way. There he is; behold the patriot! commercing with the mob, the multitude, the units, the tens, every day, throughout the long journey of the traveling sun; dealing in articles that the English, the Russian, the Prussian, the Austrian, the French, the Sardinian, the Spanish, the Portuguese, the miscellaneous merchants would utterly refuse to touch, to look upon, to examine, to value, to pay for. Behold such a negociator! catching up the splinters of almost every species of merchandise, that

floats into port, from the far-distant quays of other kingdoms, principalities and powers—original, second, third, or fourth-hand—having been subjected to one, two, three, or four bartering spirits; growing worse at every exchange, and subject to greater discount upon every subordinate transfer. We say, behold such a man—we mean negociator! toiling in, through, around and amidst all the several and respective fragments, of all sizes and dimensions, weight, value and probable cost, original and marketable, bright or dull, large or small, intrinsically fine or really coarse, demandable and saleable, or unvaluable for domestic consumption or foreign supply—and when such a man gets a whole, an entire night's rest, freed from the juvenile pipes, the young cries of the musical infants, the notes of the childish clan, ought he not?—the question is simple, very plain, denuded of ornament, of all gilding, all extrinsic superfluity, all superincumbent weight—ought he not to exclaim in the morning's eye, "wonder of wonders?" undoubtedly! so McNoddy was right!

CHAPTER X.

An interview between the metallic man and man of legal mettle.

The complaisant and financial head of the successful firm of Grasp, Gripe, Grip and Seiser, with the ease of the slow and graceful man of leisure, was moving towards the street containing his suit of banking-rooms, as the town-clock neared the hour of ten. There was no necessity for so great a man as the monied senior, Louis Seiser, Esqr., to make an earlier visit to the talkative and noisy circle of business, as his partners were fully competent to transact the toils of bankers, brokers, agents and trustees, assisted by numerous clerks, at the head of whom was the gentlemanly and talented Mr. Porker, the confidential and civil index, made to point out with accuracy the rising splendor of the mass of wealth owned by his four employers. The time of Mr. Seiser's passage from home, ordinarily, was the same period when the lofty dignitaries, Presidents, Cashiers, Agents, Bankers and gentlemen, who do no business, but look upon the out-door business of others; and other gentlemen who are looking for business, take up their line of march for the turmoil of the mart, being in and around the first section of the great city. The great banker moved with ease and deliberation, noting but few of the figures that roll along in the active streams of life, and caring for none; and with a countenance wholly relieved of all its smiles, which appeared to have been left at home—and if they had been, the wisdom of the act is plain to all, though all men are not prone to invest their smiles in the domestic funds.

If I can get into my agent's hands, thought the great financier, all the shares of that estate, and with good management it may be done, I shall realize more than any other could by purchase, though that other were on the ground itself—why should I not? to me it is larger in its prospective state, than lesser workers with little means could deem even in unreal visions: for I can wield a power without which the ingenuity of man is but a dead letter, wanting the golden spirit that produces almost the breath of eternal motion. The small holders here are not inclined to take, except that fashionable fool: his wants will drive him to any bargain. If he could be used—no, nor Porker—it wants a shrewder man than either, and one who can never allow himself to be duped by scruples in his energetic strides to serve his employer and—himself. The value is uncertain; and even my correspondent does not seem to have other than an indefinite judgment in relation to it; but it may be brilliant, and does appear worth a struggle: if none will sell here, how, without going over the waters that divide it and them, they can realize anything, is more than I can fathom. I must have it, and individually, too; and if the free offers are not taken, the policy that won my first huge gain must be resorted to. The Captain may counsel them to hold fast all my offers, even if doubled—well, we will see which will tire first—money, and the cool persuasion of its voice, or poverty, and the restless pricking of its patience. It may prove a brilliant scheme.

A small boy, whose appearance seemed to emblemize that same poverty, with restless patience, here asked the great man to cast him a trifle: the boy might have asked the granite beneath his feet as well! In the very centre of a calculation, that was doubling with the splendor of combining hope; in the middle of a dream whose sparks circled the broad heaven, in all its variety of stars and luminaries of burning light—listen to a beggar! the condescension would lower a banker, and prostrate his pride to the level of a parvenue!

Pride is the most singular master that ever reigned over the heart of man: it is more arbitrary in the close heart of a rich man, than all the laws he ever served or violated. It knows no humanity; and its breath on the feelings is the blight of the palsy. It walks with the rich man, and talks with him; eats with him, and drinks with him: it is with him at the fount, where his child is named and the priest sees it, and that it surpasseth the humility of his Saviour. It goes with him on the journey he takes; and he clings to it in solitude, and even in the stranger's

home. It follows in the speechless train that buries his child; and is as plain as sun-light on the very tomb that holds the wasting ashes of his own flesh and blood. If he survive fortune, it clings to him on the low avenues of life, where necessity has driven him. It tortures him on these same degraded roads, where shame has buried his name, his birth and his home; nor leaves him until it crushes his heart; and his last wish is its bitterest fruit—"bury me privately!"

It is not the pride of manhood in its mental reach, or in the severity of its virtue; it has no relation to the well-being of man here, or hereafter; it is the unerring index to the cold in heart, and the close and inseparable companion of luxury, and the loss of principle which the latter naturally induces.

The great cash partner pursued the even tenor of his thoughts, and the crooked road that led to the pile of his business, which was his pile of glory. He entered the offices, and dispensed to all whose eyes he caught the slight salutation, that sometimes wins more friendship than the substantial favor. He reached his own private office, where it may be said he really coined money—not that he handled the molten ore, and worked that ore into the bold beauty of the figured piece; but he was busy with another kind of ore, which, with all its specific levity, can produce greater results wherever the eye of man shines, and his lips get parched, and which is the mental ore, that makes even the worthless of the same value as that bright coin. In this, his peculiar confidential office, he built up all his projects; and after being reared, many a one was destroyed, as the subsequent reflection whispered wisdom in her maturer counsel; and there he also received such special friends as he might invite to confer on business topics, and upon other, the more general, but not more prized matters of the spot.

After ringing the bell, the porter waited upon him with the letters of the establishment, and private ones unopened. The first duty was to read all, and furnish a draught answer, to be fashioned after the polished manner of Mr. Porker, whose duty it was to answer the correspondence. Then came consultors regarding sundry matters that are very little known to people in general; such consultations being the great arcana of that peculiar latitude and longitude, and having relation to the stupendous efforts man will make, when he has money, to make that money swell to an enormous magnitude by mere mental efforts, aided by local knowledge, and perhaps by local honesty—for we contend that there are two kinds of honesty, neither much in vogue among mankind; and that local honesty is the sole and only kind that predominates in a broker's office; and if there be one who doubts the truth of this assertion, we can only recommend him to enter into the business at once, and, leaving his pocket-book at home, test the character of transactions, where no man robs Peter to pay Paul, but to pay nobody! The bell of Mr. Seiser was again rung, and the attendant sent in Mr. Porker, who smiled, and pronounced the name of the banker.

"Walk in, sir, and be seated; these letters are marked for an answer, and need no inspection before sealing."

"Yes, sir," observed Mr. Porker.

"Mr. Porker, I wish you would drop a line round to the attorney whom you engaged to transact some business lately—that shrewd, quick worker—I wish to see him on business," said the banker.

"I will advise him of your wishes," said Porker.

"His name is ——?" asked the banker.

"Pleabiter, sir; a few moments will reach him," observed Mr. Porker, retiring.

"I can but try this fellow: if his nerve serve him as mine did me, in a time when gold seemed to require a celestial voice to woo and win it, he can do all that is required," soliloquized the banker, almost audibly. "Business may be dull with him; it is an object for a man of some leisure—perhaps too much—and a good fee in advance will be an incentive to activity, and a promise of future reward will keep his mind active. Not that my efforts must cost more than the actual value; yet circumstances render the purchase of these small shares absolutely necessary—so says my agent. This lawyer must be treated with respect, and a deference shown to his opinion—though perhaps not worth a straw to me—his knowledge, when uttered, must speak for itself; and his pride must not be offended: the honesty of one like him, is as the honesty of any other man: it has been purchased, and can be again. I only want his confidence and active abilities; and am willing to pay well for his professional services: if I wish him to barter his honesty, that will be a supplementary matter—and that"—continued the banker, after a long pause, "is simply an auxiliary to the original bill of fare."

Mr. Porker entered the private office, and cut off the running commentaries of Seiser on the honesty of the attorney, real or imaginary, and informed the banker that the attorney would be at leisure in an hour, and at his office.

"Very well, Mr. Porker," observed the great man, with a nod which was understood by the clerk, who disappeared to finish some epistles in a plain and beautiful manner, both as to composition and execution; and after terminating his job, sit with the calm brow of a heavy calculator, and endeavor to multiply

the means of the great firm by the prospective profits of a thousand years.

There was an old house, situated about the centre of a block of buildings which was bounded by the Broadway road, that led down to the lowest part of the great city, and also by a street entitled for many years, "Nassau"—perhaps as a compliment to the long crooked island, which no doubt was deemed honored, by having its name conferred upon a narrow cow-path. The house was one of three stories—that is to say—the counsellor whispered his story on the first floor, the attorney spoke his story on the second, and the solicitor related his story on the third. This house was made of brick and mortar, well calculated to sustain the weight of ancient law that was crowded in it; and it was as old nearly as the independence of the lot upon which it reposed. It was entirely tenanted by the well-known class of slandered denizens called gentlemen of the bar; and some of whom had a spirited bias towards more bars than one; though the polished honor of the entire class, precluded their being restrained by bars for any long length of time. The house had not received a coat of paint within the memory of that antedeluvian personage, called the oldest inhabitant—who certainly spoke the truth for once; for it never had had a coat, though time had breached it in passing by; and the knocker, a relic of olden time, resembled the face of an octagenarian negro, whose jaws had been distended by age, and were kept so by the incorrigible coldness of compact and dreaded winter.

It was a dusty pile to look at, very ancient and dilapidated; and rumor had whispered that it was haunted by evil spirits—we mean before the barristers moved in—and some people shook their heads at it, and some dogs their tails—and all this was very natural; but there is no spot "where angels fear to tread:" and hence the house was filled with the stars of legal science! There were many rooms in the tenement; and the garret was occupied by a small family, comprising a man and woman, who swept the passage-ways in the morning, and fastened the front doors at night, after the last scrivener had left, in order to keep out the unholy forms of middle night operators, denounced in the printed list of the peoples' attorney—burglars.

It was curious to look at the old building at night, and then to think that only two people slept there—and in the attic rooms too—as if to get as near to heaven as possible, and escape all contact with ugly writs and "knuckle bone" papers, as the lady often told her husband, with a pale cheek and an eye of cadaverous glare.

Around the old-fashioned front door, with its dirty antiquated fan-light of Dutch figure and fabric, were to be seen signs enough to frighten those of the zodiac, and leave them in a far-distant and insignificant minority. The signs were all of tin, of a black ground, and with letters that once had appeared of gold color; but the sun-beat had visited the letters so often, that they finally got discouraged, and retreated to the murky ranks of a sallow bronze. Upon the signs were the names of all the occupants, with the well-known titles, beginning with attorney and running through the entire legal series—even down to the substrata of the professional mountains, called scriveners; two of whose modest indices were nailed in the lowest tier, under the window of the first floor, like the rear-guard following, as in duty bound, the sacred squadron. The house appeared literally peppered with signs, and the signs literally peppered with letters, which gave rise to some waggish remarks in that vicinity; and one called the old house the "pepper barracks," while others called the signs, the "Cayenne parallelograms;" but all such attempts to injure a colony of angels proved abortive; and when discovery was made of the origin of such traductions, it resulted in exposing the name of some sinner who had been pulverized in an action of crim. con. by the owner of a sign, and who had been incarcerated for not having sufficient public spirit to pay the costs.

How many had passed in that old door, and threaded the dusty passages, and ascended the dirty stair-way, and told with lips of truth a tale that would raise the stones of the granite street, if common sense were the judge, and not chicanery; and who had been turned away with the cold and truthful declaration—you have neither right nor remedy in law!!

Take him whose deep-seated villainy is part of the black mass we call his heart—with all the knowledge long life could render to him—with ample power to restrain his own hellishness—with the full knowledge that his acts may be committed with impunity—take him, the destroyer of virtue! and he commits his crime, and laughs at the living and at the dead, and repeats it; to bring up the self-murder, to garnish the scene of his libertine life—and where is the remedial laws? The question remains unanswered!

On the third floor of this old mansion, and in a rear room of decent dimensions and appearance, was Filem Pleabiter, Esquire, an Attorney and Counsellor of all the ancient laws that passed out of the lips of the wise men, who had succeeded each other on the bench of another realm; and of all the modern laws that had been split, and sawed, and planed, and dove-tailed, and joined together by the journeymen, who take a periodical season to finish their legislative carpentry, and then sell their mighty productions to their

own masters! In the room was a book-case, containing sundry volumes of very dissimilar countenances, as well as contents; in which much was written, and on every topic but that upon which the writer wished to be wise, for the benefit of mankind, and very verbose for the benefit of his bookseller; and in which not a solitary ray from his own mind could be discovered; for that appeared to have been eschewed as a fire that burned; but every light that illumined the pages had been refracted, and even, as is well known in some instances, through a very dull medium. Rules of court, and law miscellanies, and an almanac were there; with soap-stone ink-holders, pens and foolscap paper, and certain forms in blank, and others in disguise, all folded, and lying quiet and inoffensive, as if they were incapable of doing harm to any one, and only drawn up to please those poor orphans of a foreign soil, Mr. Doe and his bloodless antagonist, Mr. Roe. There, too, sat Mr. Pleabiter, looking as inoffensive as any of his numerous papers, and peering through the sash at the morning sky, as if in search of a legal principle, but looking to heaven in vain for any such thing! He was doing nothing in particular, nor thinking of anything special, having finished the task he had bent his mind to: and he sat—open to any sort of job; to punish a sinner or defend a saint; to open his legal battery upon the slanderer; pour his shot upon an assaulter; cover over with stout resistance the delinquent, or endeavor to smoothe the jagged way of some luxurious knight, who, having eaten to a surfeit at the expense of other people, was determined to diet himself, while passing through the conscientious ranks of the insolvent court.

The attorney of this world is a rare being; a sort of curiosity, that, like a fine edged tool, must be handled with great discretion: for he may cut friend or foe, with a smile; attack or defend with a pleasant aspect; bore a nervous sinner almost to death with a laugh; and lose the suit of a giant with politeness; sever the tie marital between man and wife, without a frown, and pocket his retainer without a tear. Mr. Pleabiter was shrewd, intelligent, of some experience; and impudent, if a case required such; and had a reputation for honesty, like all the characters on the great stage of the world. If a bid had been made of the requisite amount, would he have fallen?

There was a step near the office door, and the gentlemanly form of the great Mr. Seiser entered, and took a seat near the student of old legal history; and they exchanged those civilities which ordinarily pass between men who know the world and use its polite manners.

"I need not introduce myself," observed the banker, looking at Mr. Pleabiter, as if he would take him bodily, and read him thoroughly, and by a glance.

"No, sir," said the attorney, with a smile of deference—not feigned—he was no copyist, but an original in manners, and drew his knowledge from life.

"My business is peculiar," observed the banker, "and may not be agreeable to you."

"Does it vary so much from professional?" asked Pleabiter.

The banker disregarded this question, and in an earnest manner further observed:

"I want an attorney, who must possess and be willing to use—shall I state the qualifications?"

"If you please," answered Pleabiter; "I never have undertaken impossibilities."

"I want a man who will depart somewhat from professional pursuits," said Mr. Seiser, in his calm, earnest manner, "in order to accomplish that which, subsequently, will require professional knowledge: a man of shrewdness, impudence, and a willingness to mix with some far beneath his grade in society, in order to gain, through rewarded agents, what he could not in person. You are aware that some people value a thing more highly when a bidder appears with ample means, and who gives the slightest room for the supposition that his wants require it: cupidity measures by no scale of value. He, my attorney, must use agents for a stated purpose; point out their duty, and remain unknown as a matter of policy, if the purchase cannot be made at the price that may be deemed the worth of the thing required; for me to engage in any such business, is wholly out of the question, and my means are so well known, that my efforts would enhance the price beyond estimate."

"I will undertake such a commission, with proper means and sufficient information of the ground of operation," observed Mr. Pleabiter, who read the whole mind of the banker, and knew what he wanted, and saw instantly that it could be done, and not only so, but finished while he was asleep, if that were necessary.

"Here," said the banker, putting his statement, which was carefully drawn up, in the hands of the other, here are the notes and instructions; you will find that it wants caution, a gradual survey of the ground, and an unhasty selection of agents of sufficient intelligence, and whose attentions may be rewarded without a heavy sacrifice; who would undertake to sound the intentions of those whom we may wish to contract with, and who, also, could understand the character of the paper to be signed, so that names might be proved, &c."

"Certainly," observed Mr. Pleabiter, who understood all that was required, and had come to the conclusion that as much as the banker required should be expressed; "but if the person I select should fail in closing a

argain, even to the due execution of the pa-ers, the whole of my efforts and his will ave been useless, and a loss of all advances. Iave you considered that some experiments ust be made, the issue of which is proble-natical, considering the characters who alone ould, by constant persuasion, induce the pa-ies to sell voluntarily ?"

"I have considered all," replied the other; 'you will instruct your agent to offer a small um at first, and increase it as the difficulty ppears formidable; but in the first place your ersonal attention will be required at the place here it may be thought an agent can be se-ected, and you will not objeet, as I under-tand, to a visit."

"No, sir; my visit, however, will not be made for the purpose of making a direct of-fer to owner or attorney; I must grow in knowledge of what is wanted, even after read-ing your instructions, which I presume are ample. But, sir, suppose—for it may be ne-cessary to work against some resisting current unseen by us now—I repeat, should the in-ducements held out to sell, fail altogether"—

"True," said the banker, musing, "people will sometimes resist; the poor should not, that is, when they can obtain money. Your question puzzles me; the purchase, I am informed by letter, ought to be made even at a heavy price; but, my dear sir," continued the banker, with greater animation, "can't I leave the whole thing to you, to get the shares by persuasion and for full value—even a large value? it matters not so long as I get a deed of release signed by the persons named; and as to your costs, send for a check any day."

"You mean, leave it to the exertions of my agent," said Mr. Pleabiter, more indifferent in manner than Mr. Seiser.

"I beg pardon, that was my meaning," replied the other.

"The case is somewhat doubtful," observed the attorney, who, having received no fee, which was much wanted, as his landlord would avow, deemed it good policy to discourage any sanguine hopes, and not to melt too soon before the sun of mammon, as his client might be supposed.

"But you can allow me to hope for the most strenuous exertions on your part, and also on the part of your agent, to accomplish the end I have in view," said the banker; "the papers will be used at a distance, and where they will be scrutinized closely: and that should be remembered."

"You may rely upon my exertions to serve you legally; but, sir, my agents I cannot endorse for; and should they act so as to jeopardize myself, why, only think—it is worth all the future—" said the attorney, with more than his wonted candor.

"True, true," said the banker; "but that is not even supposable, as your knowledge of men must be too high to be deceived; and let me understand," continued the rich gentleman, taking the hand of the attorney, and leaving there an excuse for giving him trouble, and the acceptance of which would have a tendency to ensure success—"I think I can depend upon your efforts; I know it is out of your power to guarantee success; but still you may, by cautious efforts, secure the services of an agent to whom the difficulty and trouble will be merely nominal. If you present me with the papers properly executed by the parties, I will not stop to ask, nor would you know, what inducements were offered to obtain the consent of the persons: nor what, in point of fact, gained their acquiescence to the bargain."

"That would be a thing very unreasonable," added the attorney, whose scruples had sunk below the surface of observation, "to cast on us, even by implication, the burden of an agent's acts. The presumption is, if I give you a paper all complete, that it is what it purports to be, a bona fide writing, and this is the correct conclusion; otherwise a man must suspect the acts of his own agent."

"Undoubtedly," answered the banker, glad to agree with a learned man without informing him the reason why, "those are the sentiments I entertained and do now;" and all this was uttered with an earnest manner, that seemed to discard the slightest suspicion that the gentleman could entertain a different opinion.

"Precisely," said Mr. Pleabiter, "and within twenty-four hours I shall make the first effort to engage an agent whose competency must be unquestioned."

"Do," said the banker; "you can inform me of your progress and wants respecting the transaction, and call at my private office, al though I will attend you here, if requested."

"I intend to make the business my sole professional amusement, until something decisive can be ascertained; until which time it may not be necessary to trouble you: my note would reach you any mid-day?" asked Mr. Pleabiter.

"It will," responded the banker; "and I will observe, that it would not be worth while to stint your agent's pay, if success depended upon his efforts, as I think it will. Mr. Attorney, I wish you good morning, sir," continued the banker, crossing the doorway.

"Good morning, sir," said the attorney, seating himself, and taking up the papers to examine thoroughly, and make some silent commentaries thereon.

This was a new case for Mr. Pleabiter; none in the course of his practice could compare with it, either as respected the amount of the current retainer, or the peculiarity of the transactions that must be commenced, and in some measure proceeded with, by him-

self, and afterwards by such agent as he might engage, to manage the most disagreeable features of the job.

If the parties who were to be approached, and solicited to enter into an agreement, would sell and sign for a stipulated sum, the task would be light and agreeable, and altogether professional, and such as would please the attorney; but if otherwise, hazardous experiments were to be tried; such as bribery, misrepresentations and exhibitions of a series of false correspondence; or if, worse than all these, the transactions could not be made without forgery, the task must be left to others, whose fingers having been soiled for years with the stains of equivocal measures, would not scruple to achieve such an exploit. These thoughts passed the mind of the attorney, while he examined with due attention the several papers, and every word on them, and he discovered sufficient to satisfy himself that a slight experiment only would be required to ascertain the determination of the parties, in regard to selling whatever rights they had, or might have, in the shares for which the banker had made not a real but feigned offer; although he would have clung to his own proposals, had they been accepted.

Mr. Pleabiter sat ruminating on the course things might take, and after casting plan after plan in and out of his inventive mind, at length settled upon the most judicious one, viz: to see or send to the persons interested, and in a circuitous manner endeavor to ascertain their views, and at the same time drop by accident the card of some other person, so that the latter might be deemed the legal agent of the banker.

"If the parties decline to sell, and leave no opening for further consultation," muttered the attorney, "then it will be time to obtain an agent who can devise some method to persuade with which I am not acquainted. They are fools for withholding—so said the banker. The papers are to be used in a remote corner of a foreign country, and that is a circumstance that an agent of some invention would seize upon as the best features of the whole case; and this consideration brings up a suggestion, what is it worth to the banker? a man who, by usury, can draw notes out of a golden horn, even while the nearest neighbor may not hear the music. It must be of great moment to him; yet he stated nothing from which I could infer a necessity for departing from the ordinary course of business. It would be well to do it in a fair manner; but failing in that, your agent might hazard some legerdemain, in order to consummate it; these were his thoughts; I read him closely, and understood him, as disguised as he might have thought himself. A man's necessities will make him transparent. If he can get this accomplished legally, or illegally, it will be the same to him; for if he were suspected, and the circumstances looked dark, he would be in no danger. His riches would save him as it has others; gold has gilded at times more than the picture's frame; even the judicial brow that hung in it. I have seen so often the supreme power of the juggler, who could command the eloquence of the mint, that, to suppose such as he would be subjected to the coarse judgment of a criminal court, would be drawing a conclusion against the dictate of informed reason. No, it is the poor; the tools and agents, not despised and punished because they have no honesty or conscience, but because they lack money; and this is an offence, not in law, but in the view of the law's administrators. Well, be it so! Now for the business."

With these reflections, Mr. Pleabiter commenced his operations; and being a man of business, soon settled upon his plans, with one exception: if the business required too broad a departure from the line of honor, should he make it a low bow?

The Attorney was interrupted by a knock at his door, and sweeping all his papers in an open drawer, turned his attention to the visiter, who had been invited in, and who took a chair—after ascertaining that the form of Mr. Pleabiter was also a legal one, of which there were many copies extant in the world. The man who entered was a sailor, with only three visible articles clinging to his whole length and breadth, and these were a red flannel shirt, a pair of pantaloons whose cut was a curiosity, and a pair of slippers; he had hair enough on the arms, and breast, and head, to have portrayed a respectable orang-outang. His business was to get from the tackle, apparel and furniture of a vessel, the wages which the owner of the vessel denied to him. As he sat telling his string of facts to the attorney, the latter seemed in a mood not to interrupt him; for, in fact, in the mind of Pleabiter, something of what a sailor is, was rapidly passing—it may be recorded:

A man—and yet what a man! a resident of the earth—and yet a breather on the high road where the paved way is not; nor the shrub, nor the fruit-tree, nor the blooming faces of the soft school of sunlit flowers. A social being; and passing outside of the circle where the voice and look are that can ease the troubled spirit, and pass aside the harshness of its unhappy being; a traveler in one confined region pent up, with the solitary consolation of gazing only on the deep domain of the ocean. The father of a family, who scarcely listens to the living blossoms that freshen the paternal heart, where the hand of nature has knitted them with unerring power; away from all that whispers in childhood, with its voice of broken words, its touches with the gentle fingers of playful fondness;

its developments, that rivet the eye and linger in the ear, and spread through the little home of domestic joy. A wanderer in a wilderness, where the spire of the holy temple is not reared, and the home of friend and kin cannot be found. A laborer amid the tempests of the haughty elements, for the gain of those who enjoy the yield of his hands, in the quiet sunshine of comparative splendor. A sower of seed on the wide fields of danger, who reaps a transient pleasure, that sometimes carries death in its consummation. Brave in the most rugged path where moral courage is tried; and generous in the roughness of a nature that sheds no tears, but heals the wounded in silence. Apparently of a distinct race, whose efforts are impelled by the directions of a distinct language, heard only in harsh tones, more mandatory than the fiat of a King; an image of his own Maker, whose fond hope may be unrealized, of reposing in the same burial spot where his gentle mother is, and in the quietness of the grave!

Such was the picture the attorney drew of the hard worker, and sun-scorched man before him. The former told the seaman that in an hour he would prepare the necessary papers, and expect him at the office. The sailor left the apartment, and the eye of the attorney met that of his landlord, who was entering.

"I concluded to call and ask for the back rent, if you please, Mr. Pleabiter," observed the landlord, taking a seat.

"Well, sir, take a seat," said the former, with a voice of some elevation, and a countenance of stern politeness.

And it was the first instance, during the current year, of meeting that same request for rent in the same manner. When the landlord made his modest request, generally, the attorney smiled, said he regretted the fact, but so it was; he was without money, but, like every other debtor we ever encountered in this land of unbalanced accounts, expected certain payments from several persons, whose accounts had been balanced and rendered, but not honored. Again, with a smile upon his face, he would ask very politely for further time, and longer indulgence, within which to settle up the dishonored balance; and when the landlord would complain of the length of time the rent had run in arrear, with a submissive courtesy that did befit the legal man, and which would fit any other man, if he should try it, he, the attorney, would use his most persuasive powers, and plead with professional fervor for some more distant day of settlement.

But now the very words uttered, "well, sir, take a seat," carried with them the apparent ability and inclination to wash away the overgrown score, and stand, so far as his visiter was informed, wholly freed from the trammels of debt.

What a coward doth a man's debts make him! and how close duplicity then adheres to him! he cannot abscond, and thus free himself from the burden, because it lingers on the mind, and being a guilty thing, will touch the secret spring that throws the blood up to make a confession to the eyes of the world. How such a man shuns a contact with his creditor! and how ready is his tongue to deal in prevarication, when face to face the debtor and the claimant meet! and all this proceeds from an overstrained wish to appear willing to pay, while making an awkward confession of inability; and it is the only case in life where man seems eager to appear a self-accuser!

Gaze on the multitude who float down the fashionable tide of an over-filled promenade. Behold that gentleman with his new suit of imported black, and his cane, and gloves, and shining hat, and glassy boots, for all of which he has only paid his polite respects to the vendors; see how lofty is his carriage; how showy his movements, and how he looks down upon the mechanic and the ill robed, with a pride that would sweep the earth of the humble, and exhibit himself a statue of grandeur, a form to receive the homage of society; but, lo! there approaches a poor mechanic, a tradesman, and he is the creditor of that proud man. What is it that turns the eyes of the latter? why does his heart's pulses beat more rapidly? why does he cross the paved road? what has lowered his crest, and stopped the warm current of his egotistical thoughts? what has taken down the beauties of his vain dream, and cast a deep shade upon his self-esteem, for which he has lived and will live, and in that way enjoy life's being?

Simply the face of that poor trader, who is his creditor, and hence his avoided master; and one whose very look cast down into shame the dishonest heart of the fashionable debtor, and made it feel rebuked, and tremble like the coward's! can such a man move in splendor and meet with respect in society? Yes! and command the esteem of the hollow heart, and the pure fellowship of the moralist and the Christian; and he can worship God wherever fashion has reared a pile of marble for hypocrisy to visit, and appear solemn and amiable! and in his pew can utter prayers with a lip whose falsehoods have deceived the poor and the honest, and retain, in the absence of all moral principles, a name society has loaned him—the name of "gentleman!"

"Excuse me a moment, sir," said the attorney, "and I'll pay you in full!"

"I know I've been troublesome," observed the landlord—and so in truth he had been.

"No man is troublesome who solicits an honest debt," said the attorney, who, after changing his check for small notes, liquidated his debt.

"No, sir," continued Mr. Pleabiter, "it is only that man who can be said to be troubled, who sinks into debt without the ability to pay, and who never knows when he may have that ability; to such an one, a dun brings a lash whose keenness is proverbial: and sorely he pays for the fraud, though never for an honest demand."

"Good day, sir," said the landlord, departing.

"Good day, sir," returned the attorney, who turned to his desk to re-peruse the letters of the banker.

CHAPTER XI.

Efforts to borrow a dime—vast logical labor in ancient and modern thinkers, and intervening local figures.

The refined and intellectual duties of the committee on colonization, had not terminated, as was supposed by the brave members thereof. They had a duty to perform, both delightful and agreeable, as all public servants know, who have the honor to serve themselves before their masters, with single fame and double profit. It had been ascertained, since the adjournment of the committee, that more colonists would be forthcoming than were provided for by the previous efforts of the logicians; and the discovery of this fact rendered it necessary that a meeting of the committee should be held, to make provision for the patriots who offered the sympathy of a vote to help the cause of the clam-league.

Men have fought for renown and a poor living here, and for immortality, which includes living without a living hereafter: but the matter-o'-fact voters in modern times, casting aside the vulgar notions of aspirants after fame, and the airy unsubstantial relatives of its family, are induced to fight at the polls for the everlasting beauty of coin; and they often conquer too, which is well known to certain political alchymists who refine upon the old maxims and saws, and bury them beneath modern texts: one of the latter being, "honesty is not always the best policy, and in politics it is the worst!" With a full knowledge that the good old axioms—such as "fair play is a jewel," and others of the same pertinent meaning—had served out their apprenticeships to the art and mistery of "Politics," and therefore had been freed from indentures; the modern school of conscientious partizans voted them bores, and determined no longer to be bored with such airy nothings; but fight the road to victory by "all honorable means," including, of course, the "colonial."

In his subterranean chamber of commerce, after the quiet beauty of dying day had faded with the breath of the evening gun, sat Pimpy McNoddy, Esquire, one of the clear-sighted committee, in whose charming noddle sundry ideas of the profits to be gained by lodging illegal voters were making a stir, whose sounds were like the chink of gold, muttered in the far distance. There he sat on the upturned bottom of a tar barrel, with a pipe in his mouth consuming the fibrous short cut of P. G. L., with one eye closed, two arms folded, legs crossed, and in the deep peace of a cool thinker in arithmetic: "twinty-five by twinty-five is six and a quarther," thought that embodiment of financial learning. "Who's dare," shouted Pimpy, startled by a noise—but none answered; it was merely a mammoth rat, won by the solemn silence of the place, and goaded by the daring of hunger to run out among the rags, in search of a lady's night-cap that might retain the scent of bears' oil. "Varmints," muttered Pimpy, "Vot the divil can dey ate here, der spalpeens?—and yit, deres worser in de strait—and famailies too; ah! vot is de world comin' too—faimales! true as me mudder was a woomin."

A number of slight taps was made on the cellar door at this time; and before the logical landlord could ascend the steps, the form of Lawyer Jim descended, nodding; and having lit his segar stump, muttered, "Pimp, me love, how is y'?" and took a seat.

Pimpy seated himself, but felt distressed, upon hearing the words, "me love;" it was an ominous saying, and well he knew it; and he knew further, that whenever Jim uttered it, it was an unerring sign that he wanted to borrow money: and the nominal lawyer knew as a fact, that Pimpy felt distressed, and always had, the moment he, the lawyer, desired to borrow even a dime; and moreover, that Mr. McNoddy was more loth to lend money to him than any one beside: "And vy?" the lawyer would ask himself, while standing in the centre of the street, as if arrested by an enormous quere—"Vy? by the ghost of the constitution, how kin I tell!" It often puzzled him, that McNoddy, who frequently loaned small sums to characters whom Jim thought were far beneath him in respectability, still felt reluctant to gratify his wants in a small way; not recollecting the policy that moved McNoddy in all such transactions, which was invariably to loan the worst characters with whom he dealt, knowing as he did that they never would reappear to pay the debt; and this was the very object desired by Pimpy, who rid himself of a visiter he did not wish to negotiate with, and in his own language, "choked off de teef wid a trifle."

It was the case now; Jim had come down to borrow money, and it was his only chance of raising the supply for a play ticket: Pimpy,

saw it with tears in his eyes, sent there by the smoke from his pipe. Each was silent for a long time, the lawyer reflecting how he should begin, and in what manner to proceed, with a prospect of ultimate success, though the chances were against him; and Pimpy screwing up his vast mind, and endeavoring to build up a logical and impenetrable barrier, in order not to be uncovered by the enemy.

If Jim had brought in a covered prize to sell, he would have received one half of its value—the other half being retained by the negotiator, as security for small loans to be made—that fund was empty now.

At length the nominal professor, after many sighs, that went to the heart of Pimpy, concluded to commence in a theatrical way. "Ah Pimp, me love, if you'd been in the gallery the other night, to see Shylock eat pork"—

"Which?" said Pimpy, not understanding a word.

"Shylock, and Roller, and King Dick," continued Jim; "how I drunk them fellers in: them's mellow-drams for y', Pimpy," observed Jim, after a sigh; "I wish I'd been 'prenticed to the theat'ral perfession: how I'd go that Roller and Dick! and never be in want of a shillin'—and I'd have you on as Blue Baird"—

This was too much for Pimpy; he had to laugh; and out flew the smoke through his nasal channels, and in such quantities as to induce his visitor to believe that the interior of the landlord's skull was ignited.

"Vy, Pimpy, my love, you've got the heaves, and am afire inside: how kin you smoke that infernal pipe?" said Jim, expectorating a half dozen times, as if he wished McNoddy to follow his example.

"Wid de aid ob me taith; is yer blind, mon?" said Pimpy.

"Not partic'larly," answered Jim, "but I got a lick on the right beamer last night: would you b'lieve it, Pimp, my lovely father? the feller treated to two glasses, was as jovial as a feller with a mug of dollars; guv me two Cubeans, and after I sung the 'Shark with fins of kittle goold;' curse me if he didn't cloud the picter in my right beamer."—"Strange," continued Jim, shaking his head, as if it passed his philosophy that a man could give him grog, and take the light from his right eye.

"Blue as indigo," muttered Pimpy; but whether allusion was made to Jim, or the striking character that had clouded his vision, was a question: but it was exactly what Jim required of his "lovely father," as he termed Pimpy when he wanted to borrow; it was easy to apply the words to himself, and then making them appear as abusive epithets, demand retraction—or a loan.

"Who's blue?" said Jim, rising indignantly; "Pimpy McNoddy, who do y' slander? by the ghost"—

"The avil won's in the cratur! you'm been lectrified," said Mr. McNoddy.

"Well, here, make it up, my father of bargains, and lend us that shilling," said Jim, in a subdued tone, and as if he desired peace.

"Divil a farding 'ave I," returned McNoddy, with his hand in a pocket containing five dollars in change, "over the soup and candils wanted at home."

This was uttered by the man with a countenance as apparently sincere as if he had been lecturing on ethics; and the more obviously truthful he tried to make his declarations appear, the more stubborn was his customer in total unbelief.

"Pshaw, Mc, that's horrible: make it a dime, and we'll rub out the slander," said Jim, extending his hand.

"Lawyer Jem," said Pimpy, elevating his voice, but not looking at any body or thing in particular, and in fact not knowing what he did say, "you're a bag of whisky, and be damn'd to you!"

The roar of laughter that came out of the nominal lawyer was tremendous; it even brought a growl out of the canine counting-house companion, who reposed in one corner: the idea appeared to Jim so queer—a bag of whisky—with a barrel Jim was familiar, and free, and its contents never bred contempt; but for McNoddy to utter so much—for him to express anything like a facetious joke, was wholly beyond Jim's experience in that metallic closet. It did occur to him that McNoddy was getting crazy: his abstracted manner, his look with distended eyes directly in front, his unmoved position, and his singular sentiment—a bag of whisky—a thing that McNoddy never could have thought of in his lucid moments—to be more cautious, his ordinary moments—because the sentence formed a humorous combination, that the mindless Pimpy could never conceive; and then, the elevated tone in which it was uttered; all impressed themselves suddenly on Jim's mind, and fear crowded in with them—and his laughter ceased. He trembled, and thought of retreating. If Pimpy were crazy, he, Jim, might be tempted to rob him; and this thought made the former miserable.

He never could withstand temptation; and none knew it better than he knew it, from experience. He had stood in the street ragged and pennyless, and with a hunger whose mastery is harder to endure than the scoff of the million; necessity pointed to the early grave, and temptation to petty larceny; he became guilty rather than accept the eleemosenary straw, the humane offers to the starving. His eyes were now closed, but his thoughts wandered back to moments when he was first tempted to steal, and also to

drink, and consequently to consort with the condemned, and poor, and miserable. He trembled, and the perspiration gathered on his brow, and was created on his hands, without strength to move; for the misery of his mind had enervated all his limbs; he remained dumb and stirless, until the hand of McNoddy gently raised his head, and the returning sense caught the oft-repeated fiction of Pimpy—"Jem, you're a male witch!"

At these words he arose, and shook the hands of Pimpy so often and earnest, that the latter for a moment entertained the suspicion that his customer was getting crazy; and this suspicion increasing, immediately—for suspicion on a weak mind is a weed of rapid growth—made the owner of the cellar feel uncomfortable for a short period, until the well-known solicitation of Jim dispelled his fears with the rapidity of lightning, as the request was uttered:

"Pimpy, my lovely father, lend us that shilling."

"Jem, you'll be the dith ov me," cried Pimpy, not quite sure that the other was sane.

"I?" said Jim, clearing his throat and shouting:

> "The Lion bore down while the Richard did rake,
> Which caused the hearts of bold Britons to quake."

"I had to sing that over ten times at Bungspunger's last night; that kept the company two hours longer, and the landlord sold twenty-two glasses on that manœuvre. Lend us that dime, Pimpy; you know I love you, and will pay you in course."

"Vy don't you bodder of Boongspoonger?" asked McNoddy, who never loaned, if it could be avoided.

"Honor bright, Pimpy," said Jim, thoughtfully, "you know I and St. Barts lodge there on the free list, and a feller can't take liberties with his landlord. To be sure, the lodgings is cobwebbed to death; I'll bet a pound of hard soap, and let my washwoman hold the stakes"—

"Your washwoman!" muttered McNoddy, who knew that Jim's shirt had not been washed since he fell off the dock a month before—

"That my bed-room," continued Jim, "hasn't seen a broom in seven years. By the ghost of the constitution, if ever spiders made crooked lines, them's in Ellic's garrit: of all the rounds, and hoops, and cart wheels and coils, 'rithmetical and eelical, them"—

"Hould, mon," cried Pimpy, "you're 'flicted wid worms in de brain."

"Who you slanderin' agin?" said Jim, glad of another opportunity to appear the injured party, and determined to raise the loan of a dime, or its Spanish relative, a shilling.

"Vot a sowl ye is," said Pimpy, "your rid face 'ill burn slander."

"Vell, down with a dime, Pimp; and I'll be off to see the Roast Turkey in three acts; Smug is to do the Drum-stick, Misler takes the right wing, Goggle the left, the Leaders's name is Tailend; and as usual, the moneyless manager takes the 'benefit of every act!' Lend us, Pimpy," concluded Jim, with a tear in his eye, and holding out his hand for the tenth time.

"Yis; an' you'll cum up wid a turkey!" uttered McNoddy.

"Well, father of bargains, isn't a turkey cheap at a dime, stuffin' thrown in for dead weight, as you always say?" observed Jim.

"Ah me! Jem," muttered Pimpy, checking his smiles; "hair is de last spashe you'll iver draw from me; dere, go and git King Roll-her, and de Roost Turkai."

"Vy, Poppy, my love," said Jim, rising to the whole length of his slim person, with seedy pants and smoke-colored coat, which had hung to his back for five years, "vould you cut off a customer for a dime, dressed in a suit of black-be mellow drams, ven Pimpy refuses his darlin' a loan? never, Mac, my lovely father; never cut a customer for a dime."

Away flew the active amateur, humming a sea ditty, of which he had untold numbers in his memory.

He was, whenever the state of his finances allowed it, a great and enthusiastic patron of the galleries and pits of all theatres and circuses, wherever a dime or two would gain admission; and often did he sit and gaze upon a play while hunger troubled him, and could not subdue his love of tragedy, comedy and farce, termed by him, "Mellow Drams." Every thing in and about the stage was a mellow dram, if it had life enough to snuff a candle, shift a scene, or speak a word. All the supernumeraries and pseudo actors he called mellow drams; and in this opinion Jim was true to nature. All the mouthers or shouters, who receive about eighty shillings per week, he termed "mixed mellow drams," to denote the tragetic imbibers of half and half; and all the managers, primary, stage and acting, he termed "raw drams," simply to denote that managerial practice aspired to the flavor of clear liquor; and that being the case, thought Jim, wot prime customers they'd be for Bungspunger. To St. Barts, his fellow-coucher in the cobwebbed lodge, he had told the length, and breadth, and cubical contents of his passion for the sublime drama.

"If I could git on for scene-shifter first, to see the machinery, cuss me, if I couldn't come Roller in a week; but, Barty, King Dick is the sword-fish of the 'hole ocean; there's no shad or porgy in him; he pitches in, and his pitch is ekil to any tar, for he always sticks where 'e pushes: Ven he tells

he dead Harry to go down to old Harry, and ell who sent 'im, that's a burning shame; for e'd scorch up before he could unfold his ail. I'd take all the fencin' characters; here's my strikin' genus for the thing: how 'd slash the Land-castors, as the King calls he dead chap; by the ghost of the constitution, if I'd been born a scene-shifter's son, I'd een a gentleman by this time: a Roller one ight; a King another; Blue-baird another; nd perhaps a Manager. How cuss'd unlucky hat my mother wasn't washwoman to a thetre!"

But the vanity of the eccentric politician vas never whispered in regard to singing ongs, in which he distanced all competitors n the small line. In his songs a sailor was ither a hero or a martyr; and hence, he was a avorite with all the jolly tars and main-topmen, who heard him sing.

"Bill Trump was a club that knock'd the King down," and a score of equal sublimity was always ready, when Jim wanted a dime for the purpose of purchasing a pass for the jewel of his ambition—the mellow drams.

In his disposition there was nothing like a love of vice; habit had made him a tippler and a petty larcener; and he was like others, too poor to choose an honest road; he and his boyhood had been friendless; and in such, temptation finds its victims.

Jim, after borrowing sufficient to pay for a ticket, run down to witness the dissection of the melo-dramatic turkey, by a half-paid crew of loud-shouting carvers.

Peace and silence were once more restored to the underground board of trade, and Pimpy sat, without disturbance, to think upon all that was required of him as a committee-man; but after making every endeavor, he found his thoughts invariably inclined to the golden focus—profit.

Such were his thoughts, and he is not to be blamed; for what poor way-farer will not indulge in the beautiful dream of making money; so much required—sought after? and without which, how could Mr. McNoddy be believed to be respectable—any ways respectable—respectable at all? "Niver, niver," muttered Mr. McNoddy, "by the mudder dat bore me!"

At the end of this muttered maxim, a small boy thrust his head inside the cellar doors and shouted:

"Sam wants to know if Mr. Noddy's on the ground?"

"No, but till 'im I'm under ground, as usual," answered McNoddy.

Down went the door, and off the boy, whose dragging boots could be heard long after. In a few minutes, the remainder of the committee appeared; and after the usual brief salutations, sounding more like the sententious grunts of a porker than the human voice, the members took seats, and commenced thinking of matters to be, and things that ought to be, thereupon done.

"Now," commenced Bungspunger, "how shall we git at it?"

"Which?" said McNoddy, because he had nothing else to say.

"Stowing avay the odd sixty-five; all tall ones, Sam?" asked Bungspunger.

"All six feet, nigh, with water-boots, a pea jacket, and a pocket-handkerchief for a piller," said Sam Crisp.

"All to be up by eleven, in small squads," observed Tom Scrape: "all anti-monopoliars and perfessors."

"And vots' more, all honorable men, never cotched in a dirty trick," put in Sam.

"Burn me," said Noddy, "who'd think it of clammers? Cum, don't you slander the perfession, you old cur," said Tom, in dudgeon.

"Vot's the use of barking at a dog?" muttered Sam.

"Hi 'ave it," cried Bungspunger, "the boatbilder's loft; no smoking nor talking; entrance in the alley, through the scuttle, in first story; the key's left in my bar at sundown—damn me, that's it."

"Be the Lord, Bungy, you're a male witch! I nivir tought of the boat-loft," cried McNoddy.

"The most luckiest thing ever hit on," said Sam.

"Sam, we ken lodge in 'mong 'em, to countinince the clam lads, and let 'em out by cuppils," said Tom Scrape.

"At twenty-five cints aich; if the cause shuksheeds," said McNoddy, half whispering.

"Vell, that's fixed, damn me," cried Bungspunger.

The cellar door at this time was opened very easily; and, as if the quality of the customer had been anticipated by the cellar-dog, he growled in a low base roll of voice, as the form of a lady entered, well known for her devotion to the rye whisky and domestic brandy vended throughout the neighborhood, by the municipal authority's sacred license: it was Betty Blanders—a most unwelcome visiter; but especially so to McNoddy, "bekase of the etarnity of her tung," as that worthy man expressed it.

She came down the steps, ragged, bloated, and as impudent as if the inmates were trespassers there, and not her ladyship.

"I coom," said she, "to light me pipe, McNoddy, vidder ye plase, or udderwise."

None spoke, but drew on the segars they had lit with great industry, in order to smoke out the lady if possible: a word of opposition would have brought from her a volume of a hundred pages of abuse.

"I sai, Mr. McNoddy, I've coom to light

me pipe, and be doomn'd 'till ye, iviry mudder's son."

Mrs. Betty Blanders now lit her pipe, and drew and smoked like a Dutch grenadier of fifty year's practice. She was a rag-picker, bone-picker, and a selecter of every kind of street variety. You might see her in company with other graduates of her school about half past two p. m., in Elm street, nearly opposite the wholesome promenade named "Manhattan Place," formerly "Republican Alley," washing out all the pieces that the industry of hours had cast before her eyes. There reposing on the curb-stone, which the Corporation of the city had placed for her convenience, she washed all her scraps in water from the Manhattan well, poured out for her convenience by another corporation, whose charter being perpetual, would afford eternal accommodation to Betty Blanders and her heirs—that is, if they followed in the footsteps of their illustrious predecessor! She was often heard to say, it was the only use that could be made of the water; but this was ungrateful, and she said it without the fear of the company's attorney before her eyes, and wholly ignorant of the risk she run, in being submerged in the metaphysical stream that washes out common sense, in "Starkie on Slander."

"Will, and vere is yer tungs, ye unhooly sit? not a tung to bliss yerselves wid, and bespatter ye," said the lady.

There was dead silence, and smoke enough to make the dog cough, who hid his nose beneath a bag of rags to find air not mixed with clouds of tobacco.

"By the beard of St. Patrick! Mr. McNoddy is doomb; oh, tin tousand pittys for Mrs. McNoddy, and all de small ones; dare fader is doomb, and his coompinny is doomb out ob simpetty," calmly spoke the lady.

She stood, looking on the committee with winking and blinking eyes; rolling in a curling and changing cloud of smoke, that floated in sheets, and broken circles, and rising lines, as slight puffs of air supported, wound round, or threw up the playful vapor: now and then she wiped the perspiration from her upper lip, with her arm sleeve; and then casting her tragetic eyes on the silent forms of the committee, would burst into a broken rough laugh, as if she concluded that they took her for the Witch of Endor, whose presence had struck dumb the entire circle of stout hearts and muscular forms, who sat still from a desire not to open fire upon a lone neglected lady.

"Well," at length, said Betty, "an ye are doomb; the divil rastoor ye the useful mimber; its a pity for Mrs. McNoddy, and the winches of de udder doomb chaps; so tik kere of yersilves, and ye behave dacent, mayhaps I'll bodder ye soom udder time: and the divil lave his black mark on ye; and mimber ye, its Bitty Blanders that sis it, and she stucks to 'er word like a mon."

Betty having thus ejected her spirited harangue upon the devoted committee, clambered through the cellar-door, and went on her crooked way unmindful of the dog's guttural croaking, and muttering something of the ilegance of Mr. McNoddy. She reached her hole to find the soft slumbers of the night, and the awakening head-ache, that sometimes visits the morning hour, to teach the nerves of the trembling brain how to shoot.

"May the Lord hilp the poor cratur," said McNoddy.

"Vot is it," said Tom, "ails the old 'un?"

"Liquor!" said Sam, rising up; "don't it rob every body? distroy every body? make a beast of man or woman? turn 'em dishonest street pickers, dogs, worse 'en niggers? damn the blasted liquor!" continued Sam, with great vehemence, and clenched fist, and glaring eyes.

"Hallo! my strong chap," said Bungspunger, "if you go near my shop you'll rob the hotel of customers."

"Vell, vot then?" said Sam, with indignation, "an't it true? I know'd that woman ven she vas decent as any. Who guv 'er the first glass, ha? who tempted 'er to drink?"

"Vy I didn't; what d'ye mean?" said Bungspunger.

"I know you didn't," said Sam, "but vere's the beast that did it? yes, vere's the scoundrel that first guv 'er the taste? vot's to be done with him? do ye 'spose God's vengince 'ill sleep, and not tear the scoundrel limb from limb, atom from atom? damn 'im!"

The man that first gave liquor to that woman, heard this last curse of Sam; 'twas McNoddy! and there he sat, pale—trembling—guilty! He first bartered grog for something she offered in exchange; the temptation was given; she tasted again—now behold her! a beast on the sewers of earth—bloated—see her!

A thousand sermons from the pulpit would not have produced such an effect on a man like McNoddy. Cowardly, he dared not offer a word to Sam; who spoke truly—vehemently—with limbs of giant strength, and eyes that shot fire.

The spectacle was one that made Tom Scrape silent for the time being; partly to enjoy the lashing of McNoddy, and partly in admiration of the bold-hearted courage of Sam, who bearded a bad man in his own den, and struck him dumb. Sam, who knew nothing of education, surrounded by bad company, often embroiled with the lowest, and proof against that infernal drink, gave vent in his best language to the honest feelings of his heart, against a cunning man that many feared and many dreaded.

Even Bungspunger, although he knew Sam's abhorrence of the fluid which idleness renders seductive, muttered a tribute to the courage of one who had sufficient courage to be a sober man.

McNoddy continued to feel the lash; and as long as he felt, he trembled. He did not return abuse; nor did he feel eager to throttle the man who shook him so suddenly. The deep guilt of that one act struck him like an invisible bolt, and his face grew pale, and he shuddered! He had no defence; a consciousness of sin, in its horrible power, rested on his superstitious mind; there was no relief from reflection, and consequently he bent to the accusation, and in patience and dumb show succumbed. To attack Sam, had been vain; one grip of the latter would have brought blood from his pores; and again, guilt had made McNoddy a coward.

The latter slowly recovered his wonted look and manner, and felt no resentment; but, on the contrary, more liberal to all than he had before. What an anomaly is the human mind! Sam, a moment after, spoke, and laughed, and smoked, and none could tell that he had been moved by indignation. Calm, quiet and inoffensive, he took his seat and changed the subject; and then, even McNoddy felt additional respect for the man. After some time had passed, the scientific committee resumed their immense labors; ostensibly for the public good, positively for the benefit of the scaly sovereigns, and prospectively for the personal good of one half of the lofty quadruple, viz: Pimpy and Sandy. Nothing was said, as they were all at work mentally, and cogitated with the powers of interior gifts. Silence reigned in the fragment-shop, with its canopy of bluish vapor, floating in changeful beauty, like the morning drapery, that moves in globes over the shaded earth. One would have supposed, if unacquainted with the habits of the pure and enlightened alumni that respired the grayish atmosphere of the commercial college, that a wager had been ventured of some consequence, in order to ascertain the variation in shade, between the smoke from the burned segars and that which crowded over the tongue of the vender of rolls of robe, lumps of lead, and sacks of rainbow-colored rags. Pimpy McNoddy, Esq., one of the Merchant Princes of a great metropolis, in addition to his keen mercantile accomplishments, was possessed of the noiseless art of medical speculation. Often, while sitting in the studious attitude of a reader of Dr. Horne's Medica Materia, the smoke might be seen pouring out in double columns from his capacious nose. Cloud after cloud would move out in straight lines, while at the same time thought upon thought would pile themselves up, like a rising monument, in his capacious mind, until fully satisfied that the pile would bear no further addition, Pimpy would take the pipe from his mouth, and like an admirer of free and easy action, eject the "honey dew" from his lips, wipe his nose with his coat sleeve, and ejaculate, with great deference to the opinion of the members of the "no cure no pay" society; and also, the members of the "no pay no cure" incorporation — "the divvel burn me, but smokin' troo de nose is gud for consoomtion."

"Vell, Pimpy, I carn't think of any think else that's to be done," muttered Bungspunger—"vot d' ye say?"

"Jist wot you say, Ellick, by all means: I was tinking," continued Pimpy, "wedder tobakka smook wud cure de maisels in yoong paiple?"

"And what put that in your noddle?" said Sam Crisp.

"Bekase," returned McNoddy, "I wos burnin' de pipe at hoom won night, and the small McNoddy got coffin', and coffin', and by my sowl it was all well de nixt day."

"We'll have to name you Doctor McNoddy," observed Sam.

"Mc," said Sandy, "make tobacker smoke pills, and send the customer over to my shop for bitters, and then we'll advertise—'Short-cut pills, and long Sandy's bitters'—we can git a thousand certificates of patronage; Lawyer Jim 'ill give five hundred; he's formilyer with the dose"—

"And then advertise that you've cured twenty thousand, without saying anything of double the number that would die, notwithstanding Sandy's bitters," said Sam.

"Oh, Sam! you're a male witch," cried Pimpy.

"I say, my lads, let's wind up by a game of fours on the 52," observed Sandy.

"Exictly," said McNoddy, reaching a pack of cards.

"Where's the brass kittle? bring her up," observed Sandy.

"Now, my lads, four drops of the colored child."

"In coorse," said McNoddy.

"No it ain't!" said Sam; "damn the stuff!"

"Amen," roared Sandy—"I forgot; you're not a planter, and don't like colored property."

"Well, let Sam take segars, they're made out of the planter's property," observed Tom.

"All right," said Sandy, "cut for deal; why, Mac, there's a coat of grease on these keirds, that you kin cut with a copper coin. Hark! there's a knock; some of the gentility of the neighborhood—English Sal and Silly Billy; I know the music of their footsteps to a drag; short metre with her, Pimpy, no overtures; and speak in a sharp key."

One leaf of the cellar door was opened,

and down strode the form of the Amazonian, entitled English Sal, and her less than half-witted son. She was one of the shadows of earth unapproached by the hand of charity, the mild whispers of the Christian, or the efforts of the benevolent heart: and so it will be. Human goodness has its price; and when its money is transmitted to the shores of foreign barbarians, the fact is blazoned to the eyes of society, and vanity is satisfied, even when the heart is made a voluntary victim to fraud. But in the low path, where sin creeps with the sorrowful face of the abandoned one, when does the missionary appear, to support the helpless, to win back the spirit to the courage of virtue, and point to the simple but sublime moral, when Mary, who bathed the garment of the great Teacher, was pointed to the path of Heaven?

"Well, my shipmates, how's your riggin' and small coin, ha?" said the tall form of the woman.

"What's into your crazy head now?" said Sandy.

"More then you ever dre'mt on, Mr. Ellic," responded the lady.

"And what d' y' want here, my boson's mate?" uttered Sandy, in a rude voice, as if he were discoursing with sailors.

"Why, my tars," said Sal, "I've cum for to borrer; and you know I don't stir 'till I git enough for to buy Billy a shirt: cum, you're all men-a-wars-men, and don't mind a trifle."

"You better take yourself off," said Sam.

"I don't kaip a slop-shop," said McNoddy.

"Why, Sam," said Sal, standing with arms a-kimbo, and leering on the entire committee, who were nearly shrouded in a globe of smoke, "you don't refuse Billy, do y'—you, that saved his life when he was drownin'?"

"Woman, I'll throw you in the street," said Sam, angered at the remark, and half rising.

"Yes, Sammy did cotch me in a river, mommy, and blast me if any tother would," said Billy, grinning with his portrait in the primed state.

"Come, you monkey, no gabble, or I'll trounce you with your spawner," uttered Sam, shaking his fist.

"No y' don't," uttered Sal, with an excited manner, and throwing her long arms out, imitatory of a pugilist.

"I'll tell you what," said Bungspunger, "you better be off, with your sailor capers; no one wants to punish the young monkey."

"I don't fear the hull lot, except Sam, and he never strikes a womin; cum, my jollies, make up enough for Bill's garmint, and I'll be off in a jiffy," said Sal, in a tone that may be remarked in a boatswain whose words are unintelligible.

It was plain to the intellectual and political committee, that if they wished to be rid of the bold woman, whose muscular strength was powerful, and whose stubbornness was well known, that they must either comply with her demands immediately, or promise a future compliance at some coming period: the latter was the mode adopted; and the tall bonaroba took her heir at law by the hand, and when at the bottom step of the cellar, she threw him up to the first, as if he had been a form of straw. Turning round and gazing on the committee, as if she were conferring a personal favor on each, the masculine-looking lady uttered her good-night, and left them humming an air of the marine kind, the first words of which were:

> Good night, my copper-bottom'd tars,
> With hearts of lignum-vitæ;
> Fling out your bunting and its stars,
> And cheer the grog-can —— dam'me.

"Tank Heeven! the bosin's afloat," said McNoddy.

"And let her pass," said Tom; "I do hate the half-man half-womin animals."

"She's a weteran tar," said Sandy.

"Brass and badness," said Sam.

The committee were once more left in a situation to enjoy a game of keirds, in the phrase of Bungspunger; but when they were produced, it was impossible to tell the ace from the deuce, or that from its brothers in the ascending scale, so full of grease were the individuals of the pack. His royal highness, the King of Diamonds, appeared smeared over with tallow; his fellow of more heart, appeared in a habit borrowed from a pawnbroker, of green hue; the beautiful Queen of Diamonds, was pipped with spots of yellow deformity; and his majesty, the royal one of Spades, appeared white, and in a pair of spermaceti breeches.

"I shouldn't wonder if Lawyer Jim had worn them cards in his pockits," said Sandy.

"Ony to say he had something in 'em," observed Sam.

"Where 'd you git 'em, Pimpy?" asked Tom.

"Fait, it's so long ago the tings cum 'ere, I don't ricollict the knave dat sould de knaves to me."

"It's the first time I ever saw the king of spades in white small clothes," cried Sandy.

"And the queen of clubs in greasy petticoats," put in Tom, laughing at the yellow robes.

Another knock was heard at the door of the under closet, and a voice that Pimpy had been acquainted with for years, was heard without.

"Mr. McNoddy," cried a female voice, knocking with a key on the cellar door.

"It's Mrs. McNoddy—by the beard of St. Patrick, vill ye excuse me, gintlemin?—ve'll

have the foors anudder time," said McNoddy, in great earnest.

"Oh, in course; the gray mare I spose; it's nateral; ve'll excuse you," said Sam.

"Don't neglect ladies for us," said Tom.

"Especially as you've got to be a doctor," put in Sandy.

In a short time the stools, seats, kettle and cards, were all put aside, and the three last named committee-men emerged from the region of smoke, followed by Mr. McNoddy. The latter threw a small quantity of food to the night watcher, and having secured by double locks his counting-house doors, accompanied Mrs. McNoddy to the plain and simple apartments of home, which seem most to appear as such, when the few and necessary articles required by the small circle of its heads and hearts are to be found there to ensure comfort.

"What was you doing?" said Mrs. McNoddy, as they threaded the street together.

"On the committa of correspondince," said McNoddy.

"And what has the committee to do?" rejoined the lady.

"Ah, Mrs. Mac! a vast dale of matters," said Mr. McNoddy; "risolutions to spake and 'rite, tings to be managed, dilicat monovers to handle saftly; and vots better, moneys to be made and paid by the cash committa."

"Now, Mr. McNoddy, don't go up stairs like a horse," said Mrs. McNoddy, opening the door, and leading the way up to the sitting-room, or parlor, or nursery, or kitchen—it matters not which—it was one room with four names, and there were plenty in the great city to match it, in this respect.

"Hoosh!" said McNoddy, "vot's the little won saying?"

Here a small voice uttered, as if in sleep, "Bi-bi-bi-pooh." "The divil burn the flais, they're biting the poor little craturs," said Mr. McNoddy.

The voice was heard again, "Ma-ma-ma-booh"—

"Be the powers," said Mr. Mc, "the muskaiters are dare too; and thim and the flais 'ill blaid the little McNoddys to night."

"Oh, nonsense," said Mrs. McNoddy, "they're only dreaming."

"Vill, lit 'em dream; any ting but crying," said the affectionate father.

"Oh, McNoddy," said the wife, as if recollecting some domestic fact, "did I tell you how it would be? the sloop Captain's cum agin; Katy Goggle has given the sailor boy a dismissal, and the Captain's back; I'll told you so. What a coquette that gal is! and there's her mother—another new hat; will you believe it McNoddy? a new hat to make herself look young."

"Vell, Mistress McNoddy, if the paiple arn de money, lit 'em spend it, in hivin's name," said Mr. McNoddy.

"Vot, two hats, a-year?" rejoined Mrs. McNoddy; "why its abominable in a woman of her age. I shouldn't wonder if she actually painted—and in a woman of her age—fifteen years older than I!"

"Are ye positive of that, Mrs. McNoddy?" said the good man.

"Positive? I guess! didn't I see the family bible?" said Mrs. McNoddy, triumphantly, "you'll allow, Mr. McNoddy, that I know figures; and as for that gal of hers, of course I don't wish to breathe against her; but the sloop Captain must take care, there's more shipwrecks besides over-settens in the East River!"

"Vell, Mrs. McNoddy," put in her husband, "de paiple may be all better den we knows on."

"They're no better than they should be."

"Dere, dere; the very tink you said of Miss Seiser," said Mr. McNoddy, holding up his finger.

"Vell, spose I did, she musn't come 'ere agin," said the lady; "if you'd bin here when we quarreled, you should threw the tub of washwater over her."

"No, I wouldn't," said McNoddy, positively.

"Indeed you would, Mr. Mac," said she, firmly.

"I don't tink it," said McNoddy, doubtingly.

"Yes indeed you should," said the lady, more firmly.

"Do you raily tink so?" said Mr. Mac, inquiringly.

"Yes, and you should!" said the lady, authoritatively.

"Vill, Mrs. McNoddy, so ba it," said he, submissively.

"It looks likely that you're not to defend me," said Mrs. McNoddy, who, having the best of the whole dialogue, was simply in possession of that which always was hers, and would be for a hundred years, as the lady thought, in the calm beauty of her equal mind, and with the amiable spirit of her national sex!

CHAPTER XII.

An Elegant Cotilion Party, and a Small Intruder.

The evening succeeding that on which the celebrated committee on colonizing, or generalizing, had met, and labored with the mental assiduity of intellectual giants, as detailed in the last chapter, was one of the periodical times set apart and appropriated for an evening dance. It was held at a well known spot, and conducted by Alexander Bungspunger,

Esq., the proprietor of the Hotel, known among all the neighborhood, all the East and North river boatmen, all the single clam and oyster men and seiners; and, in fact, by all the adventurous spirits, either within the limits of the city or in the government domain called the navy-yard, as the "Jolly Tars."

On the sign of the political landlord were to be seen two salt-sea rovers, happy jacks, shipmates, marine spirits, or in common parlance, two able-bodied seamen; each with the flag of the country in one hand, and a huge purse of the size of a family pudding-bag, in the other, evidently intended to represent a couple of native water-fighters, with a bag full of money, and a heart full of glee, and a willingness to expend every cent for the fun of the spot. Who had the honor to paint the great sign was never known, nor is it of consequence to know; as the showers of rain and daily beat of the sun soon took out the eye of one poor sailor, and commenced melting down the money-bags of both. Below the forms on the board might have been discerned a sentence, intended as German text lettering, but looking like Hebrew characters, throwing out this benevolent recommendation: "Be happy while you may;" which was construed, inside the bar, "Drink as often as you can pay."

When an individual entered the bar-room he necessarily stepped down about six inches below the pavement—not the lowest depth to which visiters generally sunk—and found himself on a sanded floor, containing a half dozen benches, as many tables, and a bar stocked with all kinds of reduced liquors, that work the ruin of old and young. On the tables were greasy and dirty sets of dominos, with boards and pieces of chalk to mark the counts of the game; and near the tables were large boxes of gravel, with evergreen branches springing up and bearing the hue of the pig-tail of Virginia, intended for spittoons, of immense capacity.

Around the room were pictures, on which appeared the jolly sailors, in every imaginable form of hilarity and good humor, patriotic position, independent gesture, and courageous attitude; and a large number of ships, brigs, schooners, and men-of-war, with every kind of wind, under every trim of sail, and in every marine position, upon river or ocean, in calm and breeze, and tempest and hurricane. Immediately in the rear of this room, and connected by a small door, was one termed the ball-room; which was some fifty feet long by about twenty-five feet wide, and which had a floor covered with Rockaway sand—the lights that illumined the apartment, were showered down from a half dozen patent reflectors, and in one part, midway between the longitudinal sides of the room, was a pulpit erected for the musician—a very important individual in such an establishment—who played his fiddle, sometimes accompanied by an amateur as a secondo to the dark premier. In this establishment the musical spirit who scraped off the harmony for the company, was well known by the name of Black Pete, a laborious handler of the bow, who could play eight hours without fainting, by having his taste for gin and water gratified during that period.

Soon after sundown the great ball commenced; but not until near nine of the evening clock did the eyes of the commingled multitude shine like diamonds, their spirits rise high, their agility of heel and toe appear conspicuous; and the jolly tars, and fresh water seamen, and apprentices, and apronmen, and countrymen, of all grades and trades, move in high delight, and mix promiscuously and in spirited condition.

The door leading to the ball-room was secured by a thick iron chain, to prevent the sudden ingress of a mob, or individual characters of low pretensions—so true is it that the lowest think there are lower—and was generally guarded by a door-keeper of strong arm and muscular gifts, and courage to suit: but this was not, as a precautionary measure, necessary to guard against the surprise of the proper authority. The guardian of the night, either from his own good sense or from some more palpable reason, never interfered; and the higher functionaries would as soon have indicted the East wind, for breathing the rheumatism on the arms of a lazy Alderman, as commit Mr. Bungspunger for aught that was said, or sung, danced or caricatured in his elegant place of amusement. About nine o'clock the company was select and numerous; and of the dry kind, so peculiarly profitable to the heavy-whiskered proprietor.

There were a dozen and a half of the young ladies of the immediate vicinity, and some from the neighboring alleys; but none such as Betty Blanders could be admitted, because it would be a slur upon the select and sober gentility of the high company, and give rise to whispers that Mr. Bungspunger's polished cotilion parties were certainly getting too common and not exclusively of the first society.

A dozen wearers of tarpaulins from the navy-yard, and other seamen from Cherry and Water streets, were there; besides men from the river craft, the neighboring free-drinkers, and the local emperors of the bottle: such as Lawyer Jim, St. Barts, and their particular and select friends; who were, or might at some time be, able to pay for their admittance by services or money. The Water Dog, Tom Scrape, and Mr. Samuel Crisp, wandered up and down the room, with one or two of the marine corps, and a few midshipmen, disguised, and seeking for deserters;

while new female faces entered; and frequently the visitors might be seen troubling the bar-servant to pour out liquor and gather in the coin. The black fiddler knew his business, and how long to play, and when to stop, to give the grandees time to drink and wash down the dust, with liquor that cut its way through the throat, sometimes with a keen halt. The dark musician, at regular periods, knocked for his liquor, and as regularly as if he had been sentenced to drink at the specific moments: the eye of an examiner could detect him in taking, at a single swallow, the compound which a sworn inspector of spirits would have been puzzled to baptize correctly. Subsequently a knock on the fiddle intimated that the dark one was ready; and then a jolly seaman jumped up from the bench with his fat lady, whose form was too heavy to be called genteel, and with cheeks dyed with the semblance of scarlet flowers; then followed other tars, one with a lady in white muslin, with black eyes, and the voice of a hackney coachman; and another with a lady all in black, because she looked adorned the most when darkly adorned—and she had two spots on her cheeks, that were intended for the last roses of summer, but were, in fact, the last rouge-leaves from France. Another rose up with a velvet spencer, turned four times, including two turns at the pawnbroker's and one at the scourer's, and she had artificial flowers that soon grew gray with the dust in the room and the weakness of the lights.

There were other ladies, all apparently having made a previous avowal to dress dissimilar, and acting upon such determination, made an appearance, showing each a peculiar style in dress of habiliments and hair, deemed best calculated to excite the attention of the lively men-of-war and tarpaulin-wearers who shuffled in the grand circles. It might have been observed, that each figurante eyed the others with broad stare, comparing the dresses and gear as the owner swept up or down the dance; and none was more conspicuous than English Sal, whose heavy fist now and then fell upon the shoulder of a sailor, who thought the main top-gallant yard had come down to dislocate his limbs, and render him a lame duck in the dance of life.

The well-known bears' oil, and eau de cologne, and rose, and citron, and lavender, and golden distilled waters, had all been applied by the hands of the respective self-taught artists; but in half an hour from the sprinkling thereof, the perfume had arisen and clung in minute particles to the ceiling; or were swallowed up by the all-pervading and powerful pungency of reduced gin and diluted cordials, respired by the dignified and delighted dancers. The company sometimes stood on the floor in couples or knots of three, or cliques of four, and more; talking all sorts of English, distorted and agonized by low expletives, the natives of that region; or slapping each other on the shoulders, or pinching, or pulling garments, or cutting wits or pigeon-wings—the latter predominating, as wings are easier to cut than wits generally, and in an assembly-chamber particularly. Some, however, discarding the ordinary restraints of genteel society, might be seen lolling in loitering ease, and calm philosophical attitudes, upon the benches, whistling in subdued sounds an air like the nautical solo:

Stick a patch of the sky on his peeper, my boys—

while others were practising the scientific game of expectorating glandular fluids at the head of an object six feet distant. There were no rigid rules or forms for perambulators, or sitters, or dancers; and an independent mode of acting was the grand privilege of every atom of the living mass. One of the males would meet another, and in the happiest style imaginable salute him in that royal modê, known to butchers' boys, and high-binders, and socialites, by the name of "crowning;" which was knocking a man's hat over his own eyes, and exclaiming: "clear your peepers and be damn'd to y'." Burglars and petty larceners were not admitted, if possible—for if pockets were robbed, their contents might not pay the common tribute to the till of the landlord's bar; besides, the gentlemanly keeper thought it might lower the establishment in the opinion of his patrons; forgetting the old idea, "that what's impossible can't be."

If a misunderstanding unhappily arose—as quarrels will make a tempest in all mixt companies—between two or more squads, sectional spirits from the North or East river, or between two rival Juliets, the one wearing the red rose of Cherry street, and the other the dewy white rose of Water street; or between a butcher-boy known by his own story to be all "pluck," and a sailor said to be all "heart of oak"—the genteel quarrel was soon quelled, and the parties were pacified by the keeper of the hotel or his assistants. A few words, such as "none of that, my bullies," were uttered in high tones, and were generally sufficient to settle the disturbed lees in the bowl of temper; and often the accomplished pacificator and the chivalrous belligerents of the Capulet and Montague factions, were seen at the bar pledging each other in what were intended for amicable and gentlemanly sentiments, thus:

Pacificator—"Vell, here's to you, my blowers."

Capulet—"With all my heart—cut on, easy."

Montague—"Vot's the use of a blow ven the dock's in sight?"

And then came the intelligent hint from the guardian of the till: "who pays? one and six —slap down—right." And throughout the evening the lofty tone of that same guardian might be heard inviting the crowd to drink; and sometimes, while looking a five gallon cask in the face, his voice might be heard: "vot 'll y' have, my jolly?" so much had the force of habit abstracted the mind of the diligent decanter of white and red liquor; then another voice might be heard, "step up, gents —patronize the bar—dull times—who says for a drop of the color'd child?"

And subsequently the dark fiddler, striking his instrument and uttering a single cry, would rub his strings with constant industry, while several setts for the dance would spring upon the floor, take scholarly positions, and on the receipt of Pete's growl fly along, and around, and up and down, with the activity of Circusian professors; and all the time the movements continued, the shuffling of the large shoes and smaller slippers on the sand, sounded as if a thousand scrubbing brushes were worked rapidly, and over different surfaces, and by some hidden power. Then would follow a different tune from the musical performer; who never took his large eyes from the violin, never ceased pouting and perspiring; and worked so like a machine that he appeared as an appendage to a mill, where music was sawed, and sounds produced upon a scale that never met the eyes of Pete's compeers in science—the Italian lazaroni.

Anon two words from the only black gentleman in the saloon, would be shouted, and these were "change," and "promenade;" and then the arbitrary rules of the school made it necessary for the inspirited and jolly tars to catch their gay or cumbrous partners round the waist, after the peculiarly modest manner of a waltzing sett; and away the refined pairs would course around, like figures flying from debt, dragging over the sand with irregular steps, and raising the dust, and a noise, sounding unlike any thing that can be named as an expressive comparison.

It was at the termination of one of these active dances, when Tom Scrape and Sam Crisp were standing near the bar, laughing and talking with the big bar-man, that a noise of loud talking was heard near the musician, and the form of one of the fairy danseuse was seen rushing towards the bar chased by one of the sailors, a man of six feet in height, and with a brutal set of features.

"Give it up," cried the latter to the girl, when they got to the bar.

"I 'avent got it," said the girl, with spirit.

"You lie! you scum," shouted the sailor.

"You're another liar!" retorted the girl, with increasing rage.

The sailor had approached near to the latter, and when she uttered the last words, with open hand and great strength he struck her on the side face, with a force that sounded in the room, and levelled the woman on the floor. The sailor did not see her down, for at the instant the blow was inflicted, the muscular arm of Sam and his clenched fist were projected forth, with the whole weight of his body to give force to the action, and he struck the sailor in the throat: back he fell, taking down the few behind him, and rolling a dozen feet on the floor, with closed eyes and a suspension of breath, and almost of sense, as if in stupid wonderment as to whence came the blow. The stroke was not seen by all, so sudden did it follow the brutal attack upon the woman; but the blood covered the sun-burnt features of Tom Scrape, whose eyes were keenly directed to every figure near Mr. Crisp: the landlord saw the blow given, and he saw also a probable termination to the inflow of profit during the balance of the evening, unless he stopt the unusual warfare. The tall sailor, recovering his scattered senses, rushed to the bar, and waving his long arms, demanded to know who had struck him? he'd give five dollars to know—he'd make a brainless mass of the coward in an instant.

Sam spread his arms, and gently pushing aside those around him, bared his hands, and with an inoffensive look, beckoned to the fellow and spoke:

"You cowardly scoundrel! you struck a woman before my face: I don't know 'er, come on."

The invitation was no sooner given than—despite the efforts of the landlord to prevent a fight and lasting uproar—the sailor with a flushed countenance and a daring eye, rushed upon Sam, throwing out his right hand and intending to inflict a merciless blow; and so he would have done, but his hand was intercepted by the left one of Mr. Crisp, and there it found the unflinching grasp of a vice. Then came the fierce struggle of the powerful gladiators; the excited courage of giants, with frames of pondrous strength, and arms of power, and hands of the iron stroke; and then were seen the strong efforts to throw, and the matchless address to remain firm; and knowing as each did that a fall of either would give victory to one, Sam, whose passion had arisen to its height, broke out in a guttural laugh that in him was the precursor of savage exertion; and then came the predominating power of his whole strength; and with one effort he crushed the sailor to the floor, and jumping with the rapidity of lightning upon his broad chest, seized him by the throat, with a look that seemed to indicate that the prostrate man was doomed to die! The trembling of the big sailor's lips, the rush of blood to his savage face, the clash of his

grinding teeth, and the gaspingly breathed words, "let me up, damn you," told the dark thoughts of deep and horrid revenge that wanted language for the utterance of its wrath.

"You struck a womin, which I don't look over in brutes; make it up with her, and be quick," growled Sam, half insane.

"Let 'em up," said the landlord; "he's an old friend of mine, and I want to see 'im in my room."

"Does he promise?" said Sam, closing his grip on the sailor's throat, which had grown a deep purple.

"Yes—let him up," said the landlord, "I'll answer for Jim Swipes." Sandy Bungspunger, the landlord, was a polite man, as landlords should be who entertain the sovereigns of the ocean and the earth, and the queans of the latter. He knew that his duty was to persuade the sailor to accept terms of accommodation, and thereby save, perhaps, an unmerciful castigation; for his antagonist, though peaceful, cool and temperate, when from any cause his temper over-mastered himself, he might exert his whole strength in that insane state of the mind, when there appears to be a suspension of the mental powers, and the substitution of the ungovernable *animus* of a brute. Besides, the landlord would have dashed out his lights and ejected all his customers, sooner than ask Sam to leave the room, as the latter was feared by Bungspunger, and remarked for a quiet manner, and in the occurred quarrel he was deemed right. Sam left the growling sailor, and retired near the bar with Mr. Scrape, who had stood aloof after the first blow passed, but in the whole passing time his attentions were given to the bystanders, to see that none offended against Crisp in a sly way; which was frequently the case in that vicinity, where the rules of the equally respectable gang of duellists were not observed, although the combatants in the circle of fish-wielders were entitled to resort to the pseudo laws of honor as well as the pistol-flourishers, whose aims are more deadly.

The landlord of the Jolly Tars took his tall friend—as he invariably called all those whose bold and fiery passions it was an object of some moment to quiet—into a small apartment, where by persuasion, and an extra glass of alcohol, and the utterance of a score of vile epithets against Mr. Crisp, Sandy succeeded in restoring the marine belligerent to something like a reasonable beat of the pulse, and subsequently to the elegant behavior of a cool and ordinary customer.

Such was the masterly policy of Mr. Bungspunger, the floor and house manager, that when the first words of the royal quarrel were uttered, the fiddler, with the activity of an ancient proficient, commenced immediately to play a jig, the noisiest of all the accomplished dances; and although but few indulged in the exercises, still on went the music and the arms of black Pete; and all these were continued during the whole of the fracas, in order to render undistinguishable the polite language of the striking characters engaged in the turmoil, and to make the buzz and shout unheard in the street: It might have been done, too, to test the value of the old saw, "music hath charms to soothe the savage breast;" although some Italian connoiseurs may question, whether the continuous notes of black Pete was the kind of music alluded to in this quotation.

The girl received a painful but not lasting wound, and after a short time mixed with the inactive spectators on the benches, unhonored by a cushion. She did not know the singularly gifted man who had fronted and chastised the low bully, who had "laid his unkind hand on a woman;" but she seemed to look as if her untaught and unfortunate mind, though it had lost all that makes life valuable in the dark paths of a Christian world, had not lost that which makes a spot of light in the midnight gloom of a deserted heart—gratitude. Again the changing tunes of the violin were heard, and reel, and jig, and contradance, were shuffled and passed through, by some old characters and some new comers, who being untried, were untired; and maiden and sailor, and plump marine, and jovial maintop-man, and the gigantic form of English Sal, overtopping the majority of the nobility, present and shouting, all moved around; not with the inimitable airiness of the slender graces, but with the elegance of the solid and substantial bodies, and the finely planted steps and stamps of the hearty and energetic feeders on biscuit and red herrings, and pork, and pilot-bread.

Lawyer Jim and St. Barts, merry as the merriest, with not one copper in store, nor a single item of information as to whence the morrow's meals were to flow, had mixed in the exercises of jig, and jug, and dance, and decanter; and were now seen in earnest conversation with a companion, who had paid for all their liquor, and absolutely struck them almost dumb, by presenting each with a cold cut of biscuit and ham. He seemed to have made it a settled thing to induce them to drink often, which was not difficult; and offered to hire a private room, and adjourn there for a long smoke, and heavy drink, and sociable game of dominos. This offer they could not have declined, as they stated; and upon appealing to the landlord, that liberal man appeared willing, provided the new comer, who was a sort of agent for lumbermen, with a three-feet rule, which he used for a cane, and who was not very well dressed, would pay the shot.

The stranger agreed, because he considered it his party, and observed that it might be that his friends, Lawyer Jim and St. Barts, were somewhat short of money, and consequently, that he, the new comer, would respond in payment of the bill, and hoped that the landlord would ascend with them and take a short game, time and tide serving; to which the landlord observed, that he would, to accommodate all hands. The party accordingly repaired to a small room, where the new comer and Jim and St. Barts smoked with great industry—not pieces, but neat, long yellow segars, that made the two last named gentlemen more in love with tobacco than they ever had been: the party played, and smoked, and drank, and the new comer was beaten every game; but he did not seem to heed ill luck; on the contrary, he was more facetious than either of his company, and in a strain of very high glee Mr. Bungspunger found the imbibing circle.

The landlord had joined the game, to take part in the smoking and drinking coterie—not that he wanted amusement, or was eager for the profit that might be gained from the poor refreshments furnished; but his object was to find out the character of the man he was entertaining in the chamber of his high hotel: the new comer might be a forger, a burglar, or deserter, and something might be gained from a knowledge of his true character; besides, he had invited Jim and his conjoint lodger to play and drink, and what could he want of such volatile spirits? Each member of the party played with much vivacity, and drank amazingly; and they got by degrees so confidential, that the new comer did not hesitate to say, that he had frequently visited Bungspunger's cotilion parties, and danced in his saloon, and devoured his collations, and would now offer a wager that the landlord did not recollect him. Sandy observed with an oath, that he did not; so many came and left his public place of refined resort during the run of a year that it would take the memory of a short-hand writer to recollect all, big and little, short and plump, and dry and thirsty, that paid him a visit, and his own price for his commodities.

The party obtained more drink, and became so familiar each with the other, that the loud laugh appeared to emanate from a band of free-thinkers and independent denizens: and the Lawyer, whose mood was more merry than modest, slapped the new comer on the shoulder, as if he had been a true and ancient ally, and asked him if his name wasn't Bob?—the most jolly name, after Jack.

The new comer, yielding with singular ease to all the vagaries of the party, responded with the laugh of fellowship that it was, and moreover, that it was Small besides, though Bob was little enough; and that both together made Bob Small: this drew out the risibility of the whole company, who filled up bumpers and drank the health of Mr. Bob Small: "fur won prime reason," thought Jim, "he'll pay for the drink we toasts 'im in."

"And I'll tell you what," said the Lawyer, "though you're Bob Small, by the ghost of the constitution, you wouldn't make a small bob, no matter on which eel ground you may wentur, in moonlight or shade."

The party, surprised by a pun from Jim, got more jovial; and St. Barts, wishing to imitate Jim as near as possible, hit the landlord "a planter," as he termed it, on the breast, and swore that Lawyer Jim reflected humorously in more glasses than a looking-glass: to which Jim answered, that St. Barts was too blooming in the face to reflect in any glass, and was only reflective in his cups, that spoiled portraits generally, and his in particular; and that, as for Sandy, he could only tumble happily, when he saw his own tumblers tumbling their liquor into the dry channels of a monied customer. All this twattle tickled the coterie, and they laughed immoderately, and Jim most and longest, like some smart story-teller, who rewards himself for his own jest by laughing, because others refuse the ill-deserved reward.

"And now," said Jim, trying to swallow the last end of his laugh, "whosever's got the twelve widders, put 'em down."

"Here's 'em," said St. Barts; "now, Bob, my buck, play."

"Here," said Bob, "there's the 'leven sins off."

"Six-five, eh! carn't go it," observed Jim.

"That's the child—five ace," said Sandy, putting his piece down.

"There's my signitors," observed St. Barts—double ace.

"Why, my fine fellow," observed Bob Small, "that expression put me in mind of my business up here to-night; I've been to get chaps to prove signitures, and dam'me if they hasn't all squandered promiscuously, and I'm in the lurch."

"Vy, Bob, my love, vot's it worth?" said Jim—hoping some small sum would be named.

"Only a small sum," observed Bob, carelessly, and as if unconcerned.

"Small—vell, if 'ts a couple of dollars, it's a shiner," said St. Barts.

"A couple 'd go the mellow drams for some time," said Jim.

"Play up, Sandy," said Bob; not noticing Jim's remark; "can't you play, my Colonel?"

"No—hullo! there's the knock. I'll be up agin, Saint; you finish with dumby, and I'll send up liquor and segars," said Sandy—going below to see to the course of events on

the first floor, and reflecting on Bob's expression about the signatures, he came to the conclusion that Bob might be in want of a friend to do some specific duty—being a kind of duty that bore the highest price in the schedule of rewards.

The ball was active with the characters of life, though many had left the temple of harmony and agility; many new faces were moving around and peeping at all that were to be seen, and patronizing the bar, when its tender cried out, "wot say you for a drop of the colored child?—walk up, gents." The music of the dusty Pete was there, and speaking as plain as fiddles can speak, and was heard in all its tones and changes, while the fiddler's arms were active; and the perspiration stood upon his dark front like dew-drops on the brow of a bronze figure. Mr. Crisp and his friend, the Water Dog, had left for their lodgings; and Jim Swipes, the tall sailor that figured in the fight as well as the dance, was smoking on one of the benches, telling an old crony with a head of white hair all about the disturbance, and winding up his account with an oath, that he could tie one hand behind him and lick two such men, one after another; in fact, it was only from respect for the feelings and perfect gentility of the landlord, who was a large-hearted hero, and a fear to break up the ball, that he, the tall sailor, didn't smash in the lights of the fellow, "though there was four to one agin me," concluded the same man.

"No doubt on't," said his friend, "I'll bet five dollars on you, any day, in any kind of moneys."

"To be sure; you know, old Billy, vot I am—vot I measure—vot I weigh, and how many dogs carn't git me down. There," said the tall sailor, showing his fist, "you know that 'ill carry in the skull of nigger Pete—look at that arm."

"Too be sure," said Billy, with the scorn of a bosom friend; "I'll bets five more on that."

"Pooh! scoop me for a dock-rat! if I couldn't lick a dozin sich children," observed the tall sailor, with noble disdain: "Come, old Billy, let's have a slap, and then scud."

The two lofty-minded friends took their scalding dram at the bar; paid down their battered six-pence, and smacking their warm lips, withdrew from the premises.

There was a small number left indulging in the elegant and fashionable revels; all were sober; as the moment the generous patron of the bottles in the bar became so inebriate that he found it difficult to balance his patriotic self on the bench, or keep a footing on the floor, he was escorted in the small room, until the termination of the amusement, and then humanely walked round the nearest corner, where a vacant bench or stone afforded an eleemosenary bed upon which he could dream of the great privilege allowed to the lucky recumbents, who, like himself, sleep till the gas of the vinous or vegetable fluid has bidden adieu to its late detainer.

The company being small in number, was left to the guardianship of the usual attendants, and the landlord ascended to the convivial domino party. There he found as much joviality as he had left among the trio; and in truth, so comfortably situated was St. Barts, puffing a long, genteel New Orleans segar, and so supremely happy the nominal Lawyer, sipping his well-watered liquor with the air of a Spanish Don, that these worthies would have tarried a month without argument or persuasion. The latter had recited for Mr. Small a portion of his favorite "Roller;" and having been encored in several passages, was on the eve of stabbing King Henry, with a text from "King Dick," when Bungspunger entered and closed the tragedy and the Lawyer's lips at the same time.

Bungspunger resumed his seat, and a new game was commenced, with a fresh segar and glass.

"Who beat the last game?" asked the landlord.

"Ve did, and thought ve'd vait for you," said St. Barts.

"Well, push on: there's the twelve vidders," said Jim.

"Six-five," observed Sandy, who, turning to Mr. Bob Small, asked,

"Wot was that you wanted witnesses for, any think in particular?"

"Yes, I've got these lodgers of yours," said Small, in an undertone, "why not go, Sandy, and make a few dollars?"

"Vot's to be done?" asked Bungspunger, in the same tone.

"Only prove signatures; perhaps only swear that these chaps are themselves," observed Small.

"Thunder!" said Sandy, laughing, "who couldn't do that?'

"By the ghost of the constitution! who couldn't do that for a few dollars?" muttered Jim.

"I'd sooner do 't than lay in the sun," observed St. Barts, "though it's glorious to lay in the sun—snug—warm"—

"And drink in the 'mellow drams' at night, when that roarer, Jack Bott, thunders in King Dick," soliloquized Jim.

"Well, we might as well arrange now as at any other time; I'll be on the wharf tomorrow at ten, with a boat, and you can all row over to the other side, as I have business there: and I don't s'pose it's worth while to say where we're a-goin'," said Mr. Small.

"In course not," said St. Barts, a little enchanted.

"I'll stake my life on my secresy," said

Jim, in a theatrical way, and more enchanted than his friend.

"There's no danger in them," observed Bungspunger. "If I say dumb, they're deaf and dumb; if I say, don't go out, they don't budge; if I say, don't go to the play"—

"Oh no," roared Jim, "honor bright, landlord; Sandy, you know I love you—but the 'mellow drams'—dam me, I don't go it—I won't be stopped!"

All this was delivered in an earnest manner, and the nominal Lawyer appeared to be seized with the, to him, horrid idea, that the landlord should not only stop his dram of grog, but also preclude him from hearing the thunder of "King Dick," and the growl of "Roller;" all which he named "mellow drams:" the very thought drew tears from his eyes; and then he turned round and emptied his glass.

"Well, one thing more," said Mr. Small, "we shall have to drift down to a point opposite Whitehall, and pull across to the city to git the papers; and while we are drifting down, we can make certain changes in appearance, that may be considered necessary; for instance, we'll all shave."

"That in course," said Bungspunger; "I'll see to that before we leave the house; and we'll have our fish-basket, and lines and bait—you know," continued Sandy, winking.

"We'll shout drums, and flourish the lines!" cried Jim, in imitation of the thundering King Dick.

"I'll fix Jim and the Saint," said Bungspunger;" they're good at trifling jobs; and that McNoddy knows."

"Bungy, an' you're not my landlord, I'd pitch into you, by the ghost of the constitution," said Jim, laughing.

"Then it's all understood," said Small; and we'll break up after a glass of weak"—

"A parting cup of cold," muttered St. Barts, highly delighted with his company and that company's liberality.

"And then to our cobwebs," said Jim, who pitched his voice and sung:

> The Lion bore down while the King Dick did rake,
> Which caused the thunder—

The hand of the landlord cut the harmony, and closed the mouth of the musician, before he ended the distich.

"Shut up your musical shells, its gittin' too late for singin' to-night, and go aloft with the Saint."

Mr. Small shook the hands of the two worthy and well-charged idlers, and put a half dollar in the right hand of each, as an inducement to be vigilant in the morning; and then, with Sandy, Mr. Small emerged from the front door of the "Jolly Tars." To the landlord Mr. Small explained himself without reserve, as he knew Bungspunger had been engaged in many transactions of a similar kind, and could obtain good bail for any man; or good proof of a man's citizenship; but not without a reward corresponding with the probable value of the services rendered to the party accommodated. And no man was more reserved than Sandy in regard to past transgressions; none who ever ventured with him in the hazardous business of swearing from information, could complain of a single inuendo, to disturb the quiet of conscience, if any were left.

It was a spot where crime grew up, and children grew up with it; where boyhood was ripe in wickedness, before the judgment of mature years threw in its conservative aid; and where, when the idler arrived at the years of manhood, he was astounded at the display of ability in every nefarious delinquency exhibited by the foreign adepts who 'came masters in every crime that stains the calendar of the arraigned. Even the public authorities—subordinate, certainly, but not the less demoralizing—had their agents in the channels of the low, where, known by the popular name of "stool pigeons," they committed the common, but natural, blunder of affording protection to the grand larcener, and liberty to the burglar, in order to convict a felon of a minor offence. These agents of police, whether officer or his pigeon, had but one sole incentive to action—and that was personal profit; immunity they had by the common practices of authority; and both classes, always ignorant, with no intelligence but the superior instinct of the animal, contributed more to the progress, frequency and depth of crime, than even the haggard finger of starvation, whose threat seems to disarm the stoutest heart in the ranks of mankind. Among such a section of erring humanity, Mr. Small had made a proposition which he knew would be entertained; and further, that gold would set its seal of silence on the transaction more effectually than could the authorities' sunken agents.

"You all know," said Mr. Small, "that old market woman and family; and I've no doubt that you all could identify their writings, that's all. You are merely to say you believe certain marks to be their pen-marks."

"Bless your soul," said Mr. Bungspunger, laughing, "I've proved before a notary that sixty-five men were born in this country—every fellow was English! why Lawyer Jim was bail once, and we proved him worth a thousand dollars, besides a house and lot. When I told him of it, he fainted, with the idea of being a freeholder! it's all a glorious fiction."

"Too be sure," observed Mr. Small, who laughed heartily at the notions of Sandy, who had the same idea of moral integrity that a horse may be supposed to have of metaphysics.

"To speak the truth," said Sandy, "we

sometimes enlist men who push through for twenty-one year old; then we "habbus corpes" 'em, and they cum back, prov'd to be minfants."

"But about to-morrow's business; I kin git you two or three more, besides my lodgers," observed Sandy.

"I think you three 'ill answer," returned Small.

"So I think, Mr. Small, with my instructions and clear understanding. No play, no pay. They'll toe the mark without shoes or stockings, only visper 'no play' to Jim; the notion of no mellow drams would give 'im an ague," said Sandy, laughing.

"Well, I'll leave them to you," observed Small; "and as honesty always binds her bargains, there are a couple of pieces of gold —for yourself, exclusively."

"Yes, thankee," said Sandy, with not the slightest smile, nor any indication that he was receiving the price of villainy; nor had he the remotest thought that it was so, or was characterized as such even in the mind of Mr. Small. It was to him like a transaction of every day in life. When habit assumes an empire over all conscience, the latter sinks; and when rendered subordinate, it seems to become powerless.

"You will see that your troop is shaved, cleaned, and otherwise rendered available. I shall have clothes in the boat, and," added Mr. Small, "suppose you give 'em breakfast and a couple of drams before they come down, in order to keep 'em in passable trim."

"I know 'ow to fix that," observed Sandy; "leave that to me: vell, all night—at ten you say?"

"Earlier if possible," returned Mr. Small, shooting through the deserted streets, in order to get into the more civilized parts of the city, as he termed them.

The two devotees in the temple of the ancient Bacchus, the jolly Jim and Saint Barts, having left the room of Mr. Bungspunger on the second floor, ascended to the attic chamber, where the drapery, was all of domestic manufacture, and made by domestic fingers belonging to those domestic gentlemen honored with the name of Spiders. Jim had attempted to give Mr. McNoddy a description of the drapery, but failed; and the fact is curious, considering how often the faint lines of the sun, traveling from the distant regions of the East, had shone in on the immense circles of those same cobwebs—all made with an accuracy that would challenge the eye of a professor inclined to the mensuration of circles. But the lawyer and his friend, being admirers only of the indented circles of silver coin, were not fond of speculating on the area of distended forms; nor did they bother their untutored brains about the momentous queres, how the spider was taught to weave his net in such precise fashion as to trip every fly that bungled against the woven household.

The two unphilosophical players at the exalted game of dominos, reached their draperied apartment in good health, and certainly with a large quantity of spirits; which must have been at the boiling point, if there were truth in the splinter of the old song, that spirits are kept high by being thrust down. It was all dark in their room, and always so too, unless her ladyship who borrows her smiles from the sun, let slip a small ray or two through some crack or small hole, out of which a tenpenny nail had been ejected, and sent upon foreign service or retained in the domestic box. Years had gone by, and mild and silent moons had risen and gone down thousands of times, since the illuminated period when the two lodgers in this old garret could boast of having a single inch of tallow candle. Once they had done an odd piece of service for an old sexton, who had paid them in candle ends; but one half of these had been abstracted and consumed by the rats, which made St. Barts, abhor the whole race, condemned by him as accessories after the fact; in what he termed sacrilegious robbery.

"I'll tell you what, Barty; I could lick that big sailor Sam had down, if I vos ony in trim," said Jim.

"I'd do 't blindfold," said St. Barts, closing his eyes.

"You can't pitch in the dark," observed Jim, closing his—

"Vell, then, I'd tar 'im," said St. Barts, laughing—

"Tear 'im," said Jim; "vy, rough and tumble an't game."

"Yes 'tis; and its high and low, besides."

"Vell, if you an't in likker, you'll never cry at a weddin'," observed Jim, in a muttering strain.

"In course not," said St. Barts; "not if you even marry the ghost of the constitution."

This rejoinder of St. Barts put the prostrated couple in a good humor: and they laughed in concert, until the bell of some ship sounded in the distance, when they fell into a deep sleep. The silence of the place, of course emboldened all the little kingdom that inhabited, as co-tenants, the attic story, and out they all moved—the spider, the cricket, the large black bug, and the small red one; and large mice, and the generation of little ones, who flew about as if it were a holiday night; and so it was, until the two friends commenced a snoring watch that kept the spiders up close, and vibrated the drapery of cobwebs, and made every bug run, as if touched by the murmur of the domestic thunder, that found a funnel in each nose, from which "to come forth," as if bidden by another King

Richard, of whom no doubt the nominal lawyer was dreaming.

CHAPTER XIII.

A party of pleasure and the figures of the East River.

It was after nine of the clock by all the time-pieces of the neighborhood, when Mr. Bungspunger and Mr. Loryer and Sante took a seat upon the large logs that lay upon the dock, at the foot of the street wherein the hotel of the first-named was situated. Each had been shaved clean and washed, and evidently showed an improvement in the dress of the hair, which was most obvious in the two gentlemanly lodgers amid the cobweb drapery—whose hair ordinarily presented an uncombed mass of threads, with the same power to curl voluntarily as so many perpendicular wires. The dock was easily to be seen from any distance in the river, being long, and not generally honored with company, except small boats and the lesser sized sloops that floated on the waters.

On every spile and piece of upright log, and every pile of lumber and stone, were seen small placards, ten inches by six, from the numerous quack doctors that infest the bye-sections of the city: some of the handbills had a small vignette, representing a mortar and pestle, and others the head of an old gentleman, apparently five hundred years old, with bald pate, wrinkled face, and a beard as heavy as a forty pound weight—the growth of two centuries—unclipped, irregular, and, in sooth, venerable to behold. The advertisers of these bills, whose names appeared, were mostly foreign vagrants and cast-off surgeons of a disbanded army; and they seemed to be at the same time the gravest and most sympathetic of all doctors, and the merriest of all moneyless men. They stated themselves to have graduated at every medical college of continental celebrity, and to have practised in all the hospitals where a patient could be found of sufficient patience to be medicinized out of life, by regular doses of a sublime art: they cautioned poor human nature against humbugs, and other sinners, who circulated low bills around the docks, to trap the unwise; and those who had had the misfortune to contract a cold, the great grandmother of all diseases, quackery included; and then begged the public not to be advertised out of health by mere pretenders in the profession, but to apply to the only one born under heaven who could cure a cold, no matter of what age or degree of virulence; and pledging their honors—including, of course, their collegial honors—to perfect secresy, in cases where the patient had contracted a cold while very poor, and when obliged to walk the streets without shoes or socks, in the snows and slops of ice-bound winter. The money to be returned to the patient, if the cold were not cured, especially if the fee had been paid in counterfeit bills or those of misbegotten banks.

On the dock were several ship-carpenters, with strong arms, dressing the heavy oak and pine logs; and all around them were the busy little fellows, and young girls, filling their baskets with fragments, and chips, that ever and anon fell from the bright axe of the journeyman operator. And eagerly would every sinner strain the eye, when anticipating the fall of a chip; and when it did fall there was a rush of the little expectants, and down all would go, unable to check their hurried impetus. Then the boy would laugh at the little misses who had missed the prize; and the sweet young girl, red as the face of the autumn fruit, would rise and shake her small head, and pout her pretty lips, of the cherry color, at the stronger competitor. And so went on the labor and sport of the small ones, until the big carpenter interposed, and drove off the males, and gave the best chance to the troop of shoeless and unbonneted girls, until their load was heavy enough for their feeble limbs; when away they walked to the home of the poor mother, busy in preparing the noon-day meal, for one whose right arm was active in toil, and striking for the wages to be consumed in the economical demands of every day.

Often, when the stronger boys were driven away by the big laborer with the axe, the little girls indulged in a long tittering laugh that seemed to shake their small frames, which caused a smile to pass over the sun-browned countenance of the carpenter; and he would stop in his work, and gaze upon the dark eyes of the playful children, and heave a suppressed sigh, as if memory brought up the beautiful form of one which once was his, like unto them, gay in innocence, and happy in the warm sunshine, and mild in the home of its mother, whose little breath and remembered image it had pleased the great God to take from his humble hearth, and place in the dark, and cold, and hidden passage of the gloomy grave.

The three worthy gentlemen sat on a log, debating on the exact state of the tide, that poured down easily in the river, which induced Lawyer Jim to offer a bet on his own opinion, upon ascertaining that he disagreed with the others irreconcilably; but before the money could be staked, the boat of Mr. Small made its appearance, rowed by two men.—They made the boat fast for a few minutes, and having dismissed his two scullers, Mr. Small invited Mr. Bungspunger and compa-

ry to take seats in the boat. The cheerful party accordingly embarked, and rowing out into the river, did not cease active exertions until very near the shores of Brooklyn.

"Now," observed Small, "we can suspend our labors, and let the boat float down with the current. In that bundle, Mr. Leryer, you will find a suit of blue and a cap that will make a change in your appearance; so much so, that an old acquaintance would not recognize you, until after a scrutiny. This bundle," continued Small, throwing it over to St. Barts, "will give an alteration to your exterior altogether new, and under existing circumstances, very proper: while Mr. Bungspunger and myself burn a pale yellow, you can wrap yourselves in the suits without costs."

In pursuance of these instructions from the liberal Mr. Small, the obedient lodgers in the hotel of Sandy commenced the pleasing task of changing the outward man, in robes so modern and tidy, and apparently so genteel, that St. Barts looked at Mr. Leryer with an eye of open astonishment, and Jim, without intending it, burst into a hoarse laugh, on beholding St. Barts equal in appearance to a red-faced midshipman. Mr. Small and Mr. Bungspunger, in the meantime, lit their fresh segars, and conversed earnestly on every topic except that which had called them to take the passing breeze of the channel.

So much did it seem a party of pleasure, that Lawyer Jim and St. Barts laughed, as though each suit into which they had jumped, so suddenly, contained a purse whose store was inexhaustible.

They were on the eve of swearing—they knew not exactly what; they had been informed of something it was necessary to say, and verify; and having been informed that it was all true, such statement was made the foundation upon which to rest any other fact that might want verification, although they could not discover the connection, and perhaps did not regard it. There was no nicety in such men; it never occurred to either of them that there is a wide difference between a verification upon information, and one upon knowledge. Lawyer Jim might undoubtedly swear true in identifying the name of Mr. Bungspunger on paper, because he, Jim, had seen it written; and the same man would swear that it was written in his presence, if rewarded for so saying, and told that it was true. It wants but a slight analytic power in the mind to separate facts wholly discordant; but this small gift is denied to many, it would seem, from the fact that one man's falsehood is sworn to be true by another, with ease and indifference, if that other is stimulated by reward, or by the other swaying inducements, viz: consanguinity, or the feebler one of ordinary friendship, or daily fellowship.

In such men it would seem as if conscience were eternally asleep, and so blunted that it never officiated as a check, or raised its tongue to whisper of an evil that had been done, even so foul an one as perjury.

Men may fly from danger arising from the commission of a crime; and so long as they are safe from the bolts and bars of the feeble laws, and escape the scourge of the laws' inhuman agents, they, the guilty, are never seen with a pale lip or a quivering voice—the infliction of a disturbed conscience. A good law, whose severity is known, fairly administered, is a preventive of crime; but the same law, in the hands of the wavering or the unprincipled, may be made the source of crime—and a multiplying source it proves. Personal immunity from the punishment society by its rules dictates, renders the criminal contented—for some men can be happy in disgrace; and it is where all sense of honor is dead, and the slight words of the guilty sense, awakening as they do at intervals, sink back as if their force were insufficient, and of no avail.

The jolly-boat with its jovial party was permitted to float with the easy current, and the four gentlemen smoked with the air of the proud Castilian, burning his native browns; and conversation, and joke, and retorts, sometimes courteous and sometimes sententious, were passed and repassed among the company, and they seemed to enjoy the water-scene of a fine summer morning.

The sun was warm, and broadly did his golden beams spread over the green land and racing waters, and light the white sails of the moving boats, and the wings of the traveling bird, that sped through the wafting winds. On the face of the busy waters were various boats passing up and down, or cutting the descending tide in their rapid passages across the waves—with the aid of steam, or sail, or the heavy sculls. There was the water-boat, that had felt not the brush of the painter, but the mop of the tar-payer, since the poor owner first launched her on the deep streams, with no insurance against burglary, or fire, or tempest, and who labored through the whole march of the sun for the pittance of the trifling trade. There, too, went with a swift speed, and a loud shuddering noise, the proud and high steamer, like a white giant, chasing no enemy, but in pursuit of gain, with a long pennant curling over the gurgling stream, and with no sail visible, nor a single wing open, to woo the power of the passing wind: the cloud of lofty smoke pouring its dark face from the consuming furnace, roared in its egress, and tumbled over on the soaring gulls that floated above the deep larder, where their food is hidden from human eye: on she passed up the sinuous channels of the curving river, with her rattling buckets crowding

aside the heavy waves, as if in anger at their sluggishness, until she enters the narrow ways that border the country, and passing the roaring tumult of the tides, emerges like a flying swan in the broader volume of water, that feels the wind of the ocean sound.

There again is another floating castle lying deep in her dark element; and she is black and weather-worn, with ropes, and shrouds, and stays, strained and slackened by the heavy labor she performed in the rolling of the midnight seas: the men on her deck, who guided her over the changing and yielding roads, bare and barren of earth, and of its beauty and deformity, are half naked, and dark brown in the face, and tarred and greased on the hands and arms; and each has a heavy red shirt and canvas trousers, and is active in clearing away the supernumerary lumber on deck, and glad to see land, to walk upon its stability, and talk with its variety, and join in the laugh of the earth, whether it cradled their youngest years or not. There is a stout little man, with a white shirt and a large head, shouting like a boatswain, and letting all know thereby that he is the supreme commander of the castle and its garrison, and all the armament, and furniture, and apparel; and he passes the marine compliment, by calling the mates Mister; and then losing his courtesy, damns all the forecastle people, as a matter of habit, and not with a view of giving either a lower berth than they all enjoy, under his potent self. He uses a long speaking-trumpet, to carry his orders away in the fore-part of the tary-house, and threatens the small cabin-boy with a present of a ship's cat with a multiplicity of tails: a boat is rowed along side, and now the great commander begins to smell the land-breeze, to talk like a Christian, and to shake a Christian by the hand, who is the owner of all the castle and its boxes and barrels, and even the wine that sparkles, but not brighter than the eyes of that same owner, and of that same commander fresh from the sea.

There goes another dark floating mass of timbers, from a distance of more than four thousand miles; and she is laden with the living and the dead; with men, and women, and children, and merchandise: and all these living wanderers speak not a word of the language of the people among whom they have come, to struggle with the hard hand and the willing heart. They look around when they meet the pavement of the city, and they see no smile, nor proffered hand, nor friendly face—none; but all are strange, and sullen, and avoiding, and gaze upon Christian faces as if the latter were imported things, and not flesh and blood; and what is more, the creatures of the same Maker, the travelers on the same road, that leads to the cold and solemn gates of eternity.

Yes, there comes one who speaks the same language that reared their infancy; and he shakes the hands of old and of young, who cling to the garments of the mother. Now, for the first time since they breathed the free air of the cold stranger, a warm sun-beam is spreading on their fraternal hearts. How many questions they ask this man, and how they smile, and what a new light appears in the eyes of old and young, as they follow their guide up the long walks! and they gaze upon everything; for all is new; and away they stroll, in companies of five and ten; and after a short stay in the crowded city, they all place themselves on the forward deck of the barge, lashed to a North river steamer—and then a voice is heard from the crowded boats, and the fireman stirs up his blazing fuel, and the deck-hands shout and growl, and the engineer rings his bell, and the connected boats are in motion for the northern star: and away go the beating hearts, that left in age or in infancy, or in manhood, the home in their native land, for the distant fields of the western hills—where One will prosper the honest and industrious, and impart to the brow the hue that vies with the tinges on the curving leaves of the wild-flowers in the untouched wilderness.

There lies another and more enormous frame of timbers and plank, riding in the currents that move her huge body, held with the sunken grasp the anchor takes in the deep beds of the muddy bottom. She sits on the stream of her own country, with her long pennant stretching its colors in the wind, where the swallow is busy in his play with his fellows from the neighboring shore. She has the appearance of a little city within her; and there are men enough busy in her clean decks to inhabit an hundred houses; and there are square holes in her sides to let the smoke free, when the iron guns are troubled with a load that seeks its liberty with the aid of a single spark of fire. The inhabitants in the great machine run about like half-clothed Indians, and eat in small messes, and swear in couples, and triplets, and expectorate singly, without dotting the purity of the clean floor; for that were treason in the eye of one who enforces obedience. On the after part of the great black building walks a great man of power; and on the sofa below is a sleeper of greater power; and at his mahogany table, in his furnished apartment, is the greatest of all the inhabitants in the floating domicil. How stern he appears, and what deference is paid to the republican Bashaw! he moves alone—not in glory, but in the power of his authority; so that even he has a master; and perhaps his pride may not have robbed his heart of feeling, which is usually seen in the authoritative one of limited understanding.

The small boat containing the sociable par-

ty arrived opposite the southern point of the city, and then the oars were worked in good style, and the jolly-boat clave the waters with her sharp prow, and slid over in most gallant style. The oarsmen passed the crossing and re-crossing ferry-boats, and sundry sloops and schooners, and the pilot's sharp-looking vessel, and the brigs deeply seated in the waters with ballast, or something more valuable, in the eyes of another portion of the globe. The small boat was driven on, jerking ahead as the strength of those at the laboring oar was exerted—Lawyer Jim thinking of the opportunities that would be afforded by his reward, of enabling him to witness the lofty exhibitions of the mellow drams, and St. Barts estimating the exact time it would take him to drown, if by any accidental misfortune he should be submerged in the tides, and sink from the mere weight of his new clothes.

In good season they all reached the dock, and giving their boat in charge of a searcher after odd jobs, who happened to be lingering near in idleness, until the party should return, the whole company marched off for the office of the person whose specific character enabled him to take acknowledgment of divers papers.

The clothes in which Lawyer Jim appeared, added so much to his appearance, that his landlord, Mr. Bungspunger, gave his vote in favor of the old truth: "fine feathers make fine birds;" and he even declared, that if any one should, by the merest accident, tap St. Barts on the shoulder, and call him a gentleman, in his present suit of unseedy black, that the landlord would resist laughter, as a matter of common justice to a transformed man.

The party had not traveled far, before they reached the office where the acknowledgment of deeds and papers could be made in due form; and Mr. Bob Small, having obtained the sheet of parchment, took the three gentlemen, as they appeared to be, in the officer's room, who just glanced at the characters, and then prepared for completing the short job. Each one signed where he was instructed, after being shown the signatures which were to be proven; and Mr. Small was only required to swear to the identity of the witnesses, which he could do, as he had employed them with reference to this very business. Mr. Small had stated to the other three, Bungspunger, Jim and St. Barts, that the names upon the paper were actually written by the parties themselves who were named; and having assured his party of the fact often, and until they were convinced, the latter were ready to swear, in addition, that they saw the persons named write individually their own names in that particular instrument; then Mr. Small hinted that the parties had disagreed and refused to acknowledge the paper, which had caused him to resort to his friends in confidence: and accordingly, upon such information, the witnesses swore, without a blush, without hesitation, and with less ado than an honest witness ordinarily does; and the amount of the oath was, that the witnesses saw all the family, Mrs., and Miss, and Captain John, and Edward Seiser, sign and acknowledge the deed then produced.

It was evident that Bungspunger knew he was venturing in villainy, for he had often done the same thing in England in enlisting recruits; and in this country, when it was necessary to aid a liberal sailor in obtaining a protection. The two lodgers in the attic room of the landlord swore from information, and what that information was, in all its length and breadth, they might not be able to tell one hour after receiving it; and if they were able, it did not appear to them other than the same thing which they had sworn to, as neither listened very attentively to the words of the oath.

When the certificate was signed, the duty of the party was finished, and they all withdrew to a small public house to refresh after their various labors: the labor on the river affording them an appetite of the first keenness, and their love of even faded liquor giving them always a superior relish for any number in the list of distillations. The parchment was carefully folded and kept out of sight by Mr. Small; who, having seen the company seated, seemed to feel in a humor to lavish eagles or doubloons; but knowing that inferior coin might do as well, he merely proposed a cold cut with trimmings, and any sort of drink the house afforded; after the destruction of which a settlement could be made, as he named it, "for the trouble given to the party."

"Don't talk of trouble," observed Jim, "you're a prince, Mr. Small, and I've got on your liv'ry; and if it wasn't for the mellow drams, I wouldn't ax a dime."

"I don't know," said Bungspunger; "a bargain's a bargain; another think, Mr. Small 'ill insist on payin', I know."

"Certainly," said Small; "and to be in earnest about it, here, Jim, is your sum, and here, St. Barts, is your fee," giving the worthy pair a note each, whose amount almost suspended the respiration of the pot-valiant companions.

"And as for you, Bungspunger, here is a trifle, but it will satisfy, I've no doubt," continued Mr. Small, putting a larger note into Sandy's hand; "but you know there's one thing of more consequence still—let us be silent, in cups, or glasses, or small measures; I mean in merry times—let this job be in the dark; because it's no one's business but mine; and my business, as an agent for the "Lumber Company," is not to be divulged without the ruin of my whole character."

"There's no danger," said Sandy; "the Saint and Jim are my particular pigeons, in times of hunger, and thirst, and storm. I know 'em—and its all right."

"Well, come," said Small, "let's be firm and close, and give me your oaths."

The face of Bungspunger was near divulging the rising risibility, but he checked himself, supposing that Small wanted to impress the others with a belief that an oath administered by him would be binding. The three witnesses arose from the table, and pledged upon a Bible obtained in the bar of the house, an oath of secrecy: and such men as the Lawyer and his friend esteemed it as binding as any other; not the least sign of levity was observable in their countenances; and if Small had required a dozen oaths, he could have had them.

The company sat down to the table of refreshments, which included a glass of real brandy—not like the imitation sold by Mr. Bungspunger—and every individual fed and drank with all that satisfaction, and predisposition to be jovial, so often exhibited by men, more lucky than these, who make feasts for the consumption of wise men. The brandy induced Jim to cough, and St. Barts shook his head: it was very plain the pair was indulging in unwonted liquor, and of a quality that brought up tears.

"All I've to say," said St. Barts, "is this 'ere; ven ever you vant an odd job done, I'm always cock'd and primed."

"To be sure," said Sandy, "if the work's easy and the pay's good"—

"And the brandy and beef's as good as this," said Jim.

"Well, gentlemen," observed Small, with nonchalance, "if I want to be row'd down agin, I'll call up."

Mr. Bungspunger laughed outright, elevating his head and superabundant mass of whiskers, and then explained to Mr. Small that when any body called Jim a gentleman he could not resist laughter; it was a habit—he'd be damn'd if it warn't."

All the company then joined in the hilarity, and Jim, although the butt of the satire equally with St. Barts, laughed at himself, as many have done before him, who came to the conclusion, that to gain, and pocket that gain, was a full offset to temporary disappointment and chagrin.

Self-interest can make a philosopher of a dunce, and almost reverse the laws by which men are governed, and force a smile upon one whom melancholy has marked for her own, and hence Jim was right in his merriment—for he had been paid.

"My thundering landlord's always slanderin' of me, Mr. Small," observed Jim.

"I, too, Mr. Small," said St. Barts, draining his glass.

"Well, you're all right; and to be right and merry too, is a gentlemanly state of things, even if Sandy does laugh: all I have to say is, help yourselves and keep sober; for we've got to pull aginst tide, though not a strong one."

"You're the pilot of the jolly-boat, Mr. Small, and may say, 'don't have three sheets to winderd,'" said Jim, whose potations were deep, and equalled by his friend's.

The company finished their solids, and taking a final cup of the imported juice, arose from the table: the score was paid by Mr. Small, who, leading the way with Mr. Bungspunger, directed his course to the water side, where the party arrived and relieved the patient jobber, who had been asleep in the sun, and who received his reward, and enough it proved to lodge him out of the sun, when Christians like himself retire to bed. The fastening was cast loose, and the oars were made to bend to the imbecile efforts of Jim and St. Barts, who, being of the indolent school of operatives, seemed disinclined to waste power and wind, and worked along leisurely, and with a moderate stroke of the sculls.

Mr. Small had put them to work at the oars for the purpose of affording them an opportunity to perspire freely, supposing that and the labor would in some measure relieve them, in their state of partial intoxication. The labor did not prevent Jim, however, from endeavoring to hum his favorite air, "The lion bore down;" but St. Barts demanded a cessation, as the singer, from the pitching forward of his head, seemed to be interrupted every half minute, which made the song sound dreadful in the ears of so profound a judge as the Saint.

"Barty," said Jim, too happy to be silent, "we'll take the Roast Turky to night, as Misler pitches in, and carves wis a two-edger, in a double ch'racter—he pockets lightnin', and shuts thunder in his 'backer box."

"I'm in for't, in course," answer'd St. Barts.

"Pretty deep—I don't think," said Sandy, with a hoarse laugh.

"I'd pitch into y' if I could maul a lan'lor'," said St. Barts, almost losing his oar.

"Lan'lor's is free on land and river; and, like the gall'ry gentility, laugh at King Dick, or any mellow dram," muttered Jim.

"Sheer off there—damn me, you'll sink us," shouted Mr. Bungspunger, as a large steamboat moved ahead of the jolly-boat, and rounded, to make her passage upward.

Bungspunger might as well have bawled to the winds, as the pilots of the great wooden masses are supposed to be doggishly inclined to follow their own peculiar notions, in regard to endangering the lives of others. The stern of the large boat swept around, in a circle, immediately before the small boat; and the

waves went dashing against the latter one after the other, as the swells rolled on; one large wave, as if intent on mischief, and apparently in a fiercer pace than its fellows, struck the boat, and dashed nearly a barrel of its salt self over the two rowers, wetting them on the parts exposed to its violence—which caused a suspension of labor.

"Why don't you look out, you monkeys you," shouted Jim, growing redder in the face—if that were possible!

"Why didn't you strain on the larboard oar, and head the swells, you land-lubber?" cried a short thick man on the steam-boat, who was in fact a land-lubber.

"I know y'; I'll tar and feather y', if I lay my grip on y'," roared Mr. Bungspunger, as loud as he could.

This threat from the valiant Sandy was received wish a shout of laughter, and on went the boat, with her colors flying, her smoke spreading, and shooting up like a cloud from some lower region; and her paddles slapping incessantly the water, and casting over the foam that fell like rolling snow, while the western sun threw a blinding sheen on the lights of her cabin windows.

The two drenched members of the pleasure party, Jim and St. Barts, grumbled at the incident, and took their seats in the stern of the boat, in order to dry their clothes, as far as possible; and Sandy and Mr. Small resumed the labor of the oars.

It wanted but feeble efforts to urge the boat through the tide, as the latter was favorable, and increasing in power. The wet worthies in the boat's stern, having lighted a domestic Spaniard, smoked until their anger at being unnecessarily subjected to a shower-bath was reduced so low, as soon to be wholly lost in the increasing mirth of the refined party; and then the company were doomed to listen to a critical disquisition, by Lawyer Jim, on "Richard III," which, as a criticism, it must be conceded has many parallels, pictorial and exotic.

The critique might be condensed as follows: "Richard in the winter of discontent—good! Ditto, pitching into King Harry—bad! Ditto, bleeding the babbys in the tower—damn bad! Ditto, playing dominos with the Queen, and stakin twelve vidders agin one—infernal! Ditto, calling on a drum to out-talk a womin—'orrible! Ditto, frighten'd at conscience—pooh! Ditto, slashing with Richmond for a crown—great!! That last act swallows my shilling. I'm off to-night."

While Jim was descanting in Richard, with much and various elaboration, wholly from his own rare mind, the jolly-boat passed up near the eastern side of the metropolis, whose scenes are varied day after day, as come and go the floating abodes of the self-exiled, and the strange and curious of other climes. The sun was in the western section of its own world, and he declined as round, and broad, and beautiful, as when he moved in the higher chambers, where he burns in the exalted silence of meridian light. One half of the myriads of spars, and masts, and ropes, of the great mass of the shipping lying moveless at the long piers of the city, were in the deep shade, with pennants still flying in the glare of the sun-beams. The distant and unceasing rattle of cart-wheels, sent forth sounds upon the glassy tides; and ever and anon the hoarse, brief, and rough cries of the laborer on ship-deck, traveled over the waves, or joined the jar of passing and blended noises. Figures moved up and down the long docks—the petty pilferer; the larger sharper; the outcast; the valetudinarian, taking the inodorous gas from the basons, blended with a current of the sea-breeze and the perfume of the streets; the sugar-hunter; the tea-picker; the coffee-selecter; the molasses-drawer, with his hollow straw; the rag-hooker; the patient angler after a dock-porgy; the new robed and perhaps robbed sailor; the fresh-water mariner; the juvenile amateur, at the sugar-cask; the half-dressed negro; the full-rigged mulatto, shining with the gear of a new suit; and others, the water-side inhabitants, and visitors, and workers of a seaport—all moved in the circle where the heart beats, and its pulsations are supported and kept active with dragging life, by ways and means unknown and unseen by those whose eyes are only bent upon the straight lines of the beaten path of this curious speck of earth. The boat and its party were passing the crowded wharves, and here and there appeared a small steamer, blowing off with a continual roar the surplus vapor after her safe passage, and meeting, perhaps, with her fellow-traveler, on the eve of making her trip, and in want of the very power the former boat was wasting upon the floating air; and vessels smaller in size appeared; and the steam-ferriers shot out on their noisy passage of five minutes, when the toll of a bell was sounded by the rough intendants, whose hands were busy jostling the copper coin as if to brighten the dirty units. The heavy lighter, with one mast and broad mainsail, crept on slowly, aided by cumbrous sweeps in the hands of men whose faces were weather-abused, whose ears were a match to brick-dust, and whose beard had been growing since the sun of the previous Sabbath. Then, further towards the east, appeared a large company of flat-bottomed and semi-keeled boats, with long thick masts, and mainsail and jib packed close on booms and bowsprits, and tied down, as if the duck might fly off during the middle watches of the unwatched night: all these curious craft appeared like so many shops loaded with garden and field truck, and earthenware, and

hay, and straw, and hog, and pig, hickory and gnarled oak wood; and sundry unpolished, dry looking and busy big-fisted water-men, of all sizes and ages, and lengths and breadths, who run through the tempestuous Sound in search of a sound bargain, and with ability, resulting from a wide-spread knowledge of the acute and sharp science, gleaned from local habits, that teach the deep arts of a negotiator in relation to the make and close of a good trade. Then came the diminutive boats and skiffs of the fishermen; and there were seen the crowded caufs, filled with the unscaled, uncut, and living lively bass, and porgies, with their fellow swimmers; and further up the watery road, sat upon the tide a few old whalers, looking out of fashion, and in unrig, and as if abused by the giant lashings of the Pacific waves; and then appeared more of the deeply-laden sloops, some with wood and heavy brick, and the immortal "Thomastown lime," whose thirst, unslaked, is like the toper's, fiery indeed; and unlike the same toper's, satisfied with a draught of water. And then appeared brigs, full-rigged and in dishabille; besides the schooner-rigged and the rigged schooner, filled with millions of pipe and barrel staves, and pine boards and shingles, from the solitude of some northern forest. Further on, more of the fire-wood was seen, begging for a market, and joining the prayer of the legal pirate, called "inspector," for a cash purchaser; and near the last named, were ranged the dark looking flotilla, filled twenty feet high with worthless charcoal, cheap, from eastern pits, with divers looking beings of various sizes on the black craft—but to judge from the color of each, it would be difficult to select the captain from the cook, or the steward from the first and second mates, provided the conventional rules of their dun society have created a distinction between such celebrated characters. On further, were seen some boats, like pettiaugers, dislodging the vast logs from St. Domingo, and ponderous sticks of lignumvitæ, and dyewood; and near the latter a few old hulls were quietly enjoying the repose of old age—of no use to any one, not even the owners, and giving a snug berth to a few millions of parentless worms, picking holes in the bottoms of the crazy hulks, to find winter quarters, and lie hid in their cantonments out of the way of that well-known wind called the east, and in no danger from the shooting and shocking pains of gloomy rheumatism.

When the jolly-boat arrived opposite the spot where the old dismantled hulls looked cumbrous and shorn, the rowers laid their course inward, intending to land to the westward of the place they had embarked in the morning—as the boat had been engaged at the latter spot, and the walk home would be but a brief one for the members of the pleasure party. They all landed in safety; and Mr. Small, having honored the demand for the boat-hire, parted from his excited company; not, however, without a few words of caution as to all the matters transacted during the day, and a recommendation to the three friendly companions of his day's journey, to stroll home singly, and not too early.

With these words, Mr. Small went on his way rejoicing, and his company never saw him afterwards; nor would they have known him even if, face to face, he had subsequently confronted either. So complete had been his disguise, in voice, and manner, and dress, that even the keen eye of Bungspunger would have failed to recognize his liberal and jolly friend, who outdrank the whole party, without a single external sign of having indulged in unwonted liquor. Mr. Bungspunger left the party, and went to serve his customers at his own bar; but the nominal lawyer and St. Barts, having funds to an unusual amount, sojourned into the first eligible room that offered the solace of a glass of whisky, a good segar, and a game of dominos.

To smoke a whole segar was a luxury with either of these gentlemen wholly unconceived, even by the colored race, who are celebrated equally with the white for their devotion to the repulsive practice of burning the Spanish leaf. Jim, borrowing a knife for the purpose, slit the segar near the small end, and having lighted the mixed article, puffed the smoke out, in small clouds, neglected his liquor on the table, shook his head, when challenged to a game of dominos, looked up at the ceiling of the room, and watched with steady eye the lines of smoke that formed in divers distended circles, rivetted, as if spellbound; no word or audible breath could be detected, while he drew the air and warm vapor through the porous weed; and so he continued, as if he deemed the thing the fire was consuming meat and drink for the time being; and that, as between eating and smoking, the latter had preference, because he was indulging in the untouched purity of an entire article, and not a half consumed "soger." At length, after half an hour's unalloyed happiness, he took the weed from his lips, and looking his friend full in the eyes, ventured his well-concocted opinion:

"Greater, Barty, then mellow drams, if 'tan't, I'm dam'd."

"Paw! 'tan't ekil to dominos," observed St. Barts.

"Vot, not a hull one?" said Jim, in surprise.

"Paw! 'tan't ekil to a slap of Sandy's color'd child."

"Not vot?" said Jim, rising. "By the ghost of the constitution, Barty, you're losing your taste; you'm been too well fed to-day," continued Jim, shaking his head and remaining silent.

After finishing the delightful pair of segars, the two friends closed to a well-contested game of dominos; and they played with fairness and strict attention to all the rules of the game, neither endeavoring to overreach the other, nor even dissembling; but each exerting all his tact to swell the counts of his own score. Glass after glass was played for, won and imbibed, until late in the midnight, when, endeavoring to support each other, they pursued a winding path towards the bed-chamber, which was theirs by the courtesy of their landlord. They mounted to their straw with some difficulty; and having discovered, by chance, the exact spot of their repose, soon fell into their usual broken slumber and characteristic snore.

If any person had accused the nominal lawyer, or his associate, with having committed a crime so heinous as that of which they had been guilty, it would have been impossible to convince either of the fact. They had no knowledge of the truth, that they had sworn to that positively which was merely matter of information or inference, and probably an unreal thing. The thought did not occur to them that injury might be done to others by their act, for the reason that they had been told it was all done to accommodate Mr. Small. Without looking into the nature of the transaction, and making inquiries as to the necessity of their being used at all, they took all for granted that was told; and perhaps not a solitary thought ever occurred to either, unless the subject was agitated and explained in their presence; and even then, the relation might appear only to confuse, and not convince such minds of error.

The older and knowing rogue, Bungspunger, had a knowledge of all the circumstances, and his mind was differently constituted, and so as to be proof against self-accusation; for when conscience arose, its sting was avoided by hardihood—habit had rendered him callous!

The human mind is most active in its search for that which may avoid punishment; and it would seem as if the law-makers in modern times were most industrious in forming enactments whose whole scope is intended to afford aid to the cunning, who struggle to go unwhipped of justice: and as if the builders of written laws were not sufficiently imbued with feelings hostile to the moral mass of society, the expounders of the unwritten rules, which have crept up to the modern period, with all their absurdities clinging thickly and profusely, throw in the aid of their destroying judgments to encourage, not prevent crimes, and to exonerate, not punish the heartless delinquent.

The statute creates the judge, and his discretion is often the sole law that governs the trial and the sentence: and punishment then becomes the lottery of the judge's feelings. Who ever entertained feeling for the million? none; but when the perjurer or felon is arraigned, the law throws around him such a complete net of protection, beginning with the technicalities derived from a dissimilar state of society, and reaching to the misapplied feelings and feeble discretion of a mere man—perhaps partizan!—who happens to preside, that a conviction may be deemed almost an anomaly in criminal jurisprudence, and merited punishment an aim not within purview of the law!

CHAPTER XIV.

A peep into the fiscal regions, and the arena of bulls and bears, and wounded bisons.

Filem Pleabiter, Esquire, Attorney and Counsellor at Law, was sitting at his desk, in that singular home of a lawyer's mind, the law-office. Home it is for him who has a case to examine: simple, very plain in all its phases, and to be determined by the touchstone of common sense: but, lo! comes in the brief of the opposing counsellor to puzzle his adversary, with twenty written points, each fortified by a dozen quotations from two dozen books, and at least the same number of marked pages. What must be done? make up a brief of equal length, if not longer—brevity is the soul of wit: but a brief has neither soul nor body; it is all point, an index, and must be made, like the turnpike sign, to tell the judge: ☞ "Keep to the right as the law directs."

Mr. Pleabiter was sitting, busily engaged in framing a sort of paper of well-known consequence in former days—the olden days of liberality—and commonly styled a bill of costs: it was a large one, not made up of the usual items, but very unusual ones; and was intended as a mere calculation, so as to ascertain the grand aggregate.

"That's it," said Pleabiter, footing the bill, and throwing down his pen like one who had done justice to himself in every calculation, and felt pleased; "there, there cannot be an objection to that; my charge is simply for Counsel fees, and one call on all the parties; the disbursements are moneys paid to agents in superintending the whole business, and for executing the clerical duties. Now," continued the attorney, "if my client comes in, I must ascertain exactly his impressions in regard to the mode pursued to obtain the execution of these papers, and endeavor to make him understand that he, not I, is the employer of these agents, whose operations have been —honest, of course!

A knock at the office door was made by

Thomas Porker, the confidential clerk of the great Mr. Seiser, who did as he was bidden, and walked into the office, making his morning bow, and extending his white hand to that of the attorney.

"Good morning, Mr. Porker," said the attorney; "glad you've called in, as I wished to send a note to your cash partner."

"I came, my dear sir," said Mr. Porker, "at his request, to ascertain whether the purchase had been made that you have had in charge."

"I have looked over all the papers," said the attorney, "and find all of them right; and have written down instructions for the finishing off by certificates, consular and others; and you can tell him that the parchment is ready, and I will deliver it to him the first interview he favors me with, which I hope will be to-day."

"I've no doubt that he will be here," said Porker, "as he has but little to engage his attention. The fact is, sir, our cash partner does all the thinking, the calculating, and mental scheming of our whole firm; he is the shrewdest man that ever put his pen in a silver ink-holder."

"I have not a single doubt of it," said Pleabiter, earnestly.

"Then you know him," said Porker; "not, however, as well as I do. Why, sir, I've sat for an hour, endeavoring to think in the same strain as our cash partner, and to infuse in the letter I was writing some of his sententious modes of expression, especially on financial affairs; but, my dear sir, I might as well have asked the sun to dine with me!"

"He is a smiling man to deal with, and accomplished," said Mr. Pleabiter.

"A perfect Napoleon in finance," returned Mr. Porker; "if I had only one half of his original tact, and business discernment, and his talent at prophecy"—

"How rich you'd grow," said the attorney, interrupting him, "and not a whit more honest, but more avaricious; and then—lose all the courtesy that makes you esteemed by every one who knows to value manners."

"Oh, my dear sir!—Mr. Pleabiter, you have a design on me—praise from an attorney is very suspicious," said Mr. Porker.

"That is very true, when a lawyer praises his client; but recollect, Mr. Porker, you are not my client."

"But then," put in Mr. Porker, "our firm is, or, which is the same thing, our cash partner, Mr. Pleabiter," continued Mr. Porker, after some hesitation. "I do not believe you have a single man in your ranks who can compare with our cash partner, in all those traits that make the shrewd, keen, accomplished financier; some people would call him a speculator, he is not; he is a gifted, talented man, always thinking of making money: he has made one dollar double itself, without the aid of art, all by science, the gift of mind!"

"Then you think," observed Mr. Pleabiter, negligently, "that your cash partner can outwit and over-manage any lawyer in our ranks: well, it may be so; but I have my doubts."

"Professional pride," suggested Mr. Porker, with a smile.

"Perhaps," said the attorney, musing; "but, my dear sir, your cash partner must improve wonderfully, to exceed some men of my professional acquaintance in fiscal arrangements, and in the tact required to sustain what is generally termed the 'ways and means'—you understand."

"The 'ways,'" said Mr. Porker, "but not the 'means.'"

"Then I'll explain," said Mr. Pleabiter: "there are professional men who live on the best, dress in the most costly, and indulge in the finest wines that commerce brings to us; and these men cannot earn sufficient to pay for a coat, and never pay a shilling to tailor, grocer, landlord or law-bookseller. What do you think of that, Mr. Porker, when you superadd the well known truth, that such men are what society terms respectable?"

"But, my dear sir," said Porker, earnestly," I allude to the honorable exercise of the talents of our cash partner, and his honest exertions to make money."

"Every thing now-a-days is honorable," said Mr. Pleabiter, "provided the operator have that reputation; crime in a poor man is only a slip in a rich one; the rich scoundrel may walk away with the coin of an orphan, and only regret that his burden is light; while the pauper is the only subject deemed suitable to be held up to the gaze of mankind as an example. Justice, Mr. Porker, has a gloved hand for the man of wealth, and what is termed respectability, while it seizes with all its original roughness the outcast and unfortunate, without the angelic smile of gold, or the voice of a friend. There are places not far distant, where criminals are sometimes placed in juxtaposition, it would seem, purposely to prove my remarks true!"

"Well, sir," said Mr. Porker, "without agreeing with you entirely, you will permit me to say, that I have known men of small fortunes accumulate in what might be termed suspicious ways, an immense treasure—but it was mere suspicion of overreaching:

"Undoubtedly, mere suspicion," said Pleabiter; "and, as a matter of course, the subject died merely suspected; but when a friendless pauper is suspected, he is not only suspected, but is condemned on suspicion. Did you ever hear that a rich vagrant was placed in durance under the same law that deprived the poor one of his liberty? So you see, Mr.

Porker, there is a difference in this world of ours: it is not that the bindings fall from the eyes of justice, but more truly, that the eyes of the corrupt spirit that sits upon the judgment-seat is hoodwinked for the benefit of society; meaning, of course, that happy race, honored in all time by the name of respectable."

"I might agree with you," said Mr. Porker, if I could suppose that you exempt from your catalogue of denounced the real respectable.

"Now you come to the mysterious point," said Pleabiter; the man who can ascertain the latter class, must have eyes and understanding that, with great submission, do not belong to us; no, it is reserved for higher minds to separate the chaff from the grain."

"Well," said Mr. Porker, "we can't agree; but, my dear sir, dine with me at Delmo's, and we'll canvass this matter while canvassing some other more material to both parties: send me your card, on the day you can make it convenient; you will remain here for some time, as I shall report you ready for settlement."

"Certainly," said Pleabiter, "state, with my respects, my expectation of a call from the cash partner—good morning, Mr. Porker."

"Good day, sir," said the confidential clerk, darting off for the business meridian of his firm with hasty steps, and lamenting the want of judgment plainly observable in the attorney, as regarded the talent of the cash partner. But what can be expected of a lawyer, thought Mr. Porker; what can he find in cinnamon bound books, to give him an idea of the extensive acquirements of even our stock partner—the cool, telegraphic Grasp? not to mention the unlimited talents of our cash partner. Ah! there's a man that gets into a stock study, a mercantile dream, and abstract state of mind, when he weighs in an invisible balance the entire list of stocks abroad, the foreign pig-lead market, the cotton sales, and supplies and demands. A man that sees, with a keen prophetic vision, the entire circle of European transactions; discovers the probability of rise or fall in any market of continental reputation; and whose judgment is like the thunderbolt in its descent upon a speculation; while common men, and even Jews with spectacles, stand at a discount in their own estimation, and sit easy and inactive. How can a lawyer see all this? he has no eyes for grand displays in the money-market: how could such a man endure, for whole days, to be bantered to part with hundreds of shares of a stock, whose intrinsic value had been bled to dryness by the officers of the bank? and by "holding on" and pulling certain wires, and writing certain articles for newspapers, elevate the stock, and then crowd it all in the market, and feed it out to the bears, who get irrevocably ruined, by swallowing and paying for the unwholesome food, from which the blood had parted for ever? Never, thought Mr. Porker, never. No wonder at the dulness of a lawyer; although it *is* natural for a lawyer to be dull—in the stocks.

Mr. Porker laughed at his own soliloquy; and having arrived at the place of his daily labors, he ventured in the sanctuary of the cash partner, and informed that gentleman that the attorney was waiting for him on private business, not to be transacted even with the confidential agent of their immense firm.

The great man gave Mr. Porker a smile, which the latter had named "confidential courtesy," then a bow, which the clerk understood as the gentlemanly indication to go, and Mr. Porker withdrew to his epistolary duties, and the great head of the firm, with great dignity and smaller speed, commenced his walk to the office of Mr. Pleabiter.

I must endeavor to get the views of Mr. Pleabiter, thought the banker, as to the whole transaction, and his understanding of what share of responsibility necessarily clings to him. The grantee in the deed is in Europe, and I have only acted as his agent. This lawyer has acted also as his agent; and for me to feign ignorance as to the mode of obtaining this release, and declaring that I am not beneficially interested in the purchase, might startle him—let it, after I get the papers and pay the balance; I'll try his nerve and his cunning.

Mr. Seiser approached the office of the attorney, and ventured in without knocking—the message for him inducing him to drop that little mark of manners so essential to some people, sometimes.

"Good morning, Mr. Pleabiter, happy to see you in health," said the banker, taking a chair.

"In perfect health, sir," said Mr. Pleabiter, "as you appear to be; although the business of so large an establishment as your house might prejudice personal health, if too closely attended to."

"That never troubles me, sir," said the banker, with an air of dignity and distant politeness.

Mr. Seiser never left his politeness in his domestic or counting rooms; the negro who exhibited politeness to him received a full exchange; he had none of that false pride known as an infallible index to an empty head, observable mostly in persons who have arisen from what is generally termed a "low" origin—although the depth indicated, has never perhaps been ascertained. As a matter of policy, Mr. Seiser thought politeness of some consequence; as he deemed it probable a time might arrive when a favor, if asked of those to whom a little courtesy had been shown,

would be granted: then, again, the article was so cheap, it created some surprise in him that people who had nothing else to give or dispense, withheld it wherever it was due; and among mankind it is always due from one to another.

Mr. Pleabiter was a shade or two more cautious than was his wont, determined to surrender nothing except at a fair exchange.

The papers were examined very carefully, in connection with the instructions drawn up by the attorney, for the purpose of directing how certain forms could be obtained; and the bill of expenses was also placed before Mr. Seiser, that he might contemplate the whole of the completed business and its cost at the same time.

"That appears perfectly done, and nothing wanting," said the banker;" and now I'll cash your bill out of the agency fund, this business being apart from the general agency of our concern. In sending this to the grantee, who is in England, would it be worth while to send your address to him, as the person who can give further information if necessary?"

"Considering that I have only acted as the counsel to prepare the papers for signing, and that I have named you to the person who bargained and purchased by your order, it might not be necessary," said Mr. Pleabiter.

"But I pay you the expenses, and likewise the consideration money, and you can therefore make explanation where I would be wholly at a loss," said the banker.

"That can be done by the person who actually made the agreement, and paid the expenses," said Mr. Pleabiter; "shall I send him to you to make explanation?" continued Mr. Pleabiter, earnestly.

"No," said the banker, "I cannot receive relations from any but you; the counsellor is the fountain for intelligence."

"Certainly," rejoined the attorney, "so far as the matter is legitimately the business of the counsel; but the whole transaction was superintended by others"—

"And they being unknown," responded the banker, "will throw my correspondent on your courtesy for the necessary answers to his questions"—

"Which I will give him," said Mr. Pleabiter, a new idea occurring to him on the moment, "as far as my knowledge extends; but as the agent employed may be in Canada in sixty days, it will hereafter, perhaps, be out of my power to answer any questions, except that I believe the papers were fairly obtained—such was his account."

"I supposed, of course, that the purchases would be made from the individuals themselves," said Mr. Seiser: "and as he has charged the several sums for the purchase money, I have no doubt that he paid it."

"Not the least can be entertained," said Mr. Pleabiter;" the man followed your instructions, and the witnesses were unhesitating in their answers, as he informed me."

"It's well," said the banker; "on your assurance of that fact the whole value of the purchases will rest."

"I stated my belief, Mr. Seiser," said Pleabiter; "as the counsel in this business, so far you are at liberty to use my name; for did I suspect that any thing like fraud had been committed, I could not, for the whole domain, give assurance to your principal; nor, indeed, would you be safe in transmitting for record, papers of that kind."

"Certainly not," said Mr. Seiser, smiling at the earnest manner of the attorney, in trying to convince himself that his own story was true; "I would destroy them all, rather than send an unavailable mass of paper."

The gentlemen rose up, and the conference ended; each had persuaded the other of the unsuspected nature of the transaction, and of the pureness of his own acts; and Mr. Seiser, shaking the attorney by the hand and smiling, as he had not before, took his leave in order to complete the papers and transmit them to his correspondent, who was a resident agent of his in England.

When his footsteps were pacing the pavement, Mr. Filem Pleabiter cautiously passed into the hall, and gazed on the form of the banker as he turned into Broadway; and returning to his room, told two individuals who had been secreted in the closet of the apartment to come forth. These two men, who were the scriveners whose small signs in white painted letters were seen among the mass on the front of the house, came out of their hiding-place, each with a note-book in his hand, with the substance of the conversation that had taken place written down. Mr. Pleabiter paid for this service in a small matter of a few shillings, and examining the remarks to see whether they were correct, and finding them so, the two writers put their initials to the respective papers, to aid their future memories, if ever required. This being done, he dismissed the men, and taking his hat and papers of the day, went out on other business, with a clear conscience and a determination to keep it clear, if that were a possible thing—considering the temptations that are known to beset a path where chicanery is considered as evidence of talent, and cool impudence is as evidence of uncrushed firmness!

When Mr. Louis Seiser, the cash partner of the great firm of Grasp, Gripe, Grip and Seiser, arrived at his office, he found several persons waiting for him, whose business varied as much as the shades of the rainbow. The first to whom he gave private audience—and he did so because the great stock partner was absent—was a genteel middle-aged man, a Jew, with whom a legion of notes had been

placed as collateral security upon loans made at an enormous discount. His business was to arrange for an advance of some forty thousand dollars, pledging these same notes, drawn by various dry-good dealers, grocers, and non-resident purchasers, in good standing. His necessity for the money had grown apparent only that morning, and in forty-eight hours he must raise the money. The money was promised, provided, upon inquiry, the notes proved as sufficient as anticipated. Off went the Jew to make a purchase of more notes, commonly called 'business notes,' at a discount which would net him double the amount of the premium he would have to sacrifice to the demands of the banker.

Then came another gentleman,—these needy men were all 'gentlemen'—who wanted to sell a note of a well-known citizen, whose name was a rim of gold on any paper; and the note was bought for double the legal rate of interest only out of respect perhaps to the drawer. Then, another gentleman had bills of exchange, for several thousand pounds sterling, which he wanted sold, but not forced through the market, and left them in charge of the great firm, because he had confidence in the character of the house, and deemed it to stand on a firm foundation. Another entered, and she was a lady wanting to purchase a set of exchange, or three several orders of the firm, addressed to another firm who breathed the air of Europe; and the payment of either of which said orders vitiated the others. When the lady entered, every minor clerk ran to get her a chair; and Mr. Porker, dressing his face in the finest smile he ever commanded, made her a low bow, and announced her to the cash partner, and sent her in to that great man.

Then appeared a small man, with a grave face and rotund body, who had been all through the city, among retailers of all sorts, wherever a Carolus dollar could be purchased for a small premium, and he had a bag filled with the Castilians, whose Spanish selves had not been bored, or sweated, or drilled, by the Jewish sharks, whose apparatus was secretly at work, in subterranean workships, clipping the coin in a manner that bespoke a new way of making a king pay tribute to the tribe of Manasa!

Another man—for these poor people were all men, and not gentlemen—made his appearance, with acceptances to the amount of thirty thousand dollars, which had to pass the eye of a partner, and be registered, and minuted in proper books. A neighbor next stept in, whose conference with the premier of the firm was sententious and of a peculiar kind, not to be understood by every body not intimately acquainted with the pure and holy practices of financial proficients, and with the manner of spinning golden tops, flying promissory kites, and flourishing silken flags on the monetary ground, where boys of a large growth, and others, unclassed in the tables of Buffon, spread their long fingers and capacious hands, and grow rich in animal wisdom, but never wise in their riches!

"Good morning, sir; easy to day?" asked the neighbor, smiling.

"Good morning, sir; overstepped the mark?" inquired Mr. S.

"Yes, sir, somewhat: three hundred and fifty; Delaware and Hud —— ample ——" said the neighbor.

"I believe we have no orders," said Seiser, calm and indifferent.

"Eighty-seven and a half," observed the neighbor, not indifferent.

The great Mr. Seiser rung his bell, and a clerk entered. "Jackson, any stock order unfilled, sir?"

"None, sir; all filled in board," said Jackson, withdrawing.

"Loan at eighty-seven," said the neighbor, in a low whisper.

"I doubt much," said Mr. Seiser, more placidly indifferent.

"At one for thirty days," said the neighbor, in a low whisper.

"How much?" asked Mr. Seiser, with his neighborly smile.

"$10,000—pledge 75 per share," said the neighbor, shaking his blank assignment of the stock, and giving a bow for Seiser's smile.

"Twenty days would be unobjectionable," said Seiser, "even for fifty thousand."

"Good—done—draw," said the neighbor, whose jockeylike hilarity overstepped his politeness: and such will be the case with many men, who, like the neighbor, wanted to make "three" of the money—that is, "three per cent a month," he paying but one to the great firm, and they paying but one-half of one per cent to a neighboring bank, which would loan it instanter.

Then directions were given to consummate the agreement; and all was done in that beautiful, moral and consistent manner, recommended to men of all names and times, by the hints of conscience and the maxims of Christian laws!

Presently a tall gentleman made his appearance, a well-known operator in scrip, and in stock half filled and replete, who aided in obtaining loans, discounts, transfers; and many other, the infinite variety of transactions of the fiscal region.

He was a street broker, or in local parlance, one of the subterranean fiscalities, who buy and sell in the open air. Often, during the business hours of the day, he might be observed standing on the corner of one of the streets that intersected the money-avenue, looking up and down, with a large number of shares of stock, and sums of money to loan, and bor-

row, and other matters penciled down in his memoranda with a gold pencil case, that sometimes remained in his hand or between his lips a long while, for exhibition to the passers by.

Frequently he would nod to small brokers, being the newest emigrants to the spot of operation, and chief clerks and silent partners —the latter, like the head of Junius, standing "the shadow of mighty names"—then he would touch his hat to the Cashier or President of the bank within which he kept his account, and which account drew forth the unwilling scrutiny of the murmuring first teller every time a check was presented for payment, even of a trifling amount. Sometimes he would stand on the corner, and gaze down the streets as if he were admiring the red masses of tall and giant buildings that stood one against the other, so as to form a regiment of brick and mortar mountains, with black or green window leaves, and stuck all over with lettered signs, of every size, and shape, and color; and which remained through rain or sun-pour, or snow or thunder time, from the first floor sill up to the lateral leader which threw off the crowding and gurgling waters of the midnight-tempest. Then, again, he would cast his eyes over towards the old bank, which had discounted paper for more than a half century, and distinctly hear therein the voice of the coin family in every degree of value and variation of sound; and then he would whistle—not for want of thought, but want of that same family, or some of its members, even the invalids, viz. the clipped, the sweated, the bored or the drilled.

If no business could be found towards the close of the market-day, four or five of his business compeers would close around him on or near the corner, each with a list and pencil case in hand, and enter into a spirited conversation; and subsequently each would endeavor to deal with the other honestly? undoubtedly! for that is a thing so german to the spot, that it had acquired notoriety as a solemn truth, throughout three quarters of the money-loving globe! Then might be seen the utmost reach of high practical talent, in the several and respective ways of barter, and sale conditional or absolute, and exchange instanter or on time stated, or to be stated within a given period, near or in futuro.

'Diamond cut diamond,' is very good as a similie, and we honor the first utterer of that shining maxim; but people see it done so seldom, if at all, that it does not reach to the grand elevation, especially in a moral point of view, of one broker cutting another! No; in no part of the habitable globe; in no school of ethics of the highest celebrity; in no university where theories of elevated honesty are taught incessantly, and which the students never practice in their walk of life; in no code that ever exhibited its pages to the eyes, as the result of the experience of a professor, whose actions in life were libels upon his own written rules; in no book of naked principles, or those clothed with the profound commentaries of a gloomy ignoramus; in no "commentaries," so called, which are so many small clouds rising over the horizon of the author's brain, and kindly loaned to his readers to render their vision opaque.—

No! nowhere—in no thing, or in fountain head, or in derivative source, can be seen the same business tact and keen, commanding genius, and polished honor, as when one money-shaver is shaving another; that is, to repeat what we said before, when broker cuts broker! For a countryman, honest as the nag he ploughs with, to look on, who never had witnessed the exertions, the toil, the intellectual throes and physical positions of the monetary and commercing animals during a severe contest, it would strike him dumb, and make him a clod of granite!

To observe all that transpires; to see the Bull advance, with his sharp offers, keen eyes and stern forehead, with tail flourishing, and as independent as the flies in the wind, and all fearless of the lasso of his opponent; to watch the opposing Bear, his chaps half fallen, his eyes not half open, but apparently shrinking from the brazen look of the attacking offerer, and somewhat frightened lest the day's unfortunate result should fix him with an incurable sore head! to mark the approach of the Bison, recently recovered from the insolvent fever, after using the well-known specific of the statute law, viz: perjury! to witness that Bison covering the retreat of his friend the Bear, taking the offers of the Bull, and lowering the front of the latter, who is sucking and biting the head of his gold pencil case, and who is immediately backed by a friend of his own stock, a junior Bull, who has no creditors, for the reason, no animal would ever trust him—all four now increase the *interest* of the scene—and this is literally true; for in such scenes there never was an atom of *principal* to clog the operations. The Bull stands his ground, and shakes his horns and bites his pencil case, with the relish of habit; and the Bear, with his sconce well oiled, to parry the attacking scratches, closes up with open eyes and snout all rampant and fixed, both backers, the growlers of the second notes in the musical passages; the Bison and the junior Bull push on their financial friends, with winks and nods of the approved school, ready to lend their paper reserves, of the scrip or promissory kind; and even ready to bleed to death, before the close and clinch of a good bargain shall be made adversely; and now may be observed the curl of the Bull's whiskers, hair after hair, as increases

.e prospect of his cut being final, and out-ıtting the rank flesh of the Bear! and again, ark the mustache of the latter—black, stiff, ıd like serried ranks of porcupine-quills, owing more wiry as lessens the picture of ıin; and curving gently and growing more x as increases the chance of having a deep, ıd valuable, and closing bite, at the paper ınks of his keen financial opponent! and ıark, again, the Bison, with nostrils distend-d and eyes glaring, while he advances and rges the Bear, inch by inch, and foot by ›ot, from forty-two and a half to sixty-one nd a quarter per cent.—not for cash, for that ı scarce in the menagerie—but on time, and me named and entered, and cut deeply on ne hides of each; while all the current time, Bull, junior, backs his Bull, and gores him ·ith a horn of persuasion, to decline the urly offers of the Bear, until the golden mo-ıent of overreaching arrives, when down oes the knife, and out comes the grease of he cut animal! Then off, with weak steps nd growling throats, go the out-managed, ·hile in high delight the victors make their ·ay to feed on the clover and timothy fields f Monsieur Discount.

At other corners, and under trees in the ame dominion of coin, the same contests ıight be viewed; and it is strange that big ›ys go by whistling carelessly, and even ıen pass on, and see nothing but stones, and ınud, and gravel, and flags of granite, in the ıaved walk; while, in point of fact, it is oc-ıupied by the high-priests of the animal ıarket, exchanging pearls!

The tall street-broker was shown into the ıanctuary of the monied partner, and made ıany bows and smiled, as one polite man who ·ants to ask a favor will smile to another, who ·ay or may not want to grant it.

The broker made his business known, and ·ave a clear and reasonable account of the ·anner in which a speculation might be ·ade, yielding in a few days a handsome ·ofit. The scheme was approved by the ·eat Seiser, who forthwith gave orders to ·ave it consummated; for cash is more pow-·ful than all the powers of mechanics in a ·oker's office. The bargain was a good one ·r the street-broker, who would share in the ·ofits, and run no risk of capital; a risk that ·e could not run for want of capital—he had ·t an ulcerated crown—the affair would ter-·inate in a couple of days; and the informa-·on given by the street-broker was known to ·e other, so that the bargain would be bene-·icial to all parties. He had no sooner left ·e great Seiser, ere another of the same ·lass requested an interview with him. He ·ad a long conversation with the cash part-·er, so private that the clock could not hear, ·ad it stopped ticking to catch the whispered ·ords: a check was drawn for the last visitor, who made his bow and retired, with the countenance of a man who had profited by a half-hour's conversation.

The bell of the great Seiser was then rung, and Mr. Porker doubled up in his fist a small paper with a few words, viz: "sell at any price for cash;" and a certain name of a certain body without a soul also written thereon. Away went Mr. Porker; but where, tradition says not; though in a few days the aforesaid body without a soul was so unfortunate as to lose the superintending care of a polite and gentlemanly being, who had robbed the said body of one half of its bulk, and who, with the euphonious name of a defaulter, was permitted to retire to his country seat, accompanied by the tears of very many respectable people, who had drunk his wine, listened to his music, and fed at all his dinners, bought with the money which had been extracted from the slim purse of the young child and the scanty store of the widow; and the latter might go to the labor of the needle, or want, and not a tear would be shed by the sympathetic friends of the respectable robber!

Then came another visitor, who was admitted, and whose business was to ask the great cash partner to act as a referee in a certain case where judgment was required, and knowledge in all the details of business, and the case was a very important one. The cash partner agreed to act in conjunction with some others; and it afterwards proved to be a case where there was not a single doubt of money being due from an insurance company to a poor man who had lost his entire means; but the officers of the company were afraid to pay for the loss, because the sum was a large one; the law was full of uncertainties, and it was no hardship to speculate and tamper with the honest loser.

At length the keen, cool stock partner made his appearance, and with the cash partner looked deliberately over the sales on time, for cash and barter; and one word only passed for a long time, each viewing with a thinking silence the appearance of the numerous paper transactions, and comparing them with previous sales.

"The note was in time," said Mr. Seiser.

"Precisely—cash—transfer in one hour," said Mr. Grasp; and having said thus much, Mr. Grasp retired to his own peculiar desk, to arrange his sales, purchases and other daily matters. The bell of Mr. Seiser sounded again, and Mr. Porker received a note for one of the street-brokers, and taking his hat, passed out in the street to deliver it, as he did all confidential correspondence; this being part of the system of the firm, and always adhered to. Mr. Porker found the broker in his cellar—for so it was in point of truth; it was a small room of about twelve feet square, with a large desk in one corner,

upon which was the long stock-book of the owner—no other paper; with one inkstand and a pen therein; a box in another corner, filled with coal and kindling-wood; a stove to burn both, and three chairs to sit upon and gaze at the fire, were all the articles in this office. It appeared to be a place made for passing coun'erfeit money, so dark was it at all times; and the unfortunate rat who had to abide there for fifty years, might with his dying groan say that he had never made a shadow in the sun. The brokers who occupied it might have gone in, in search of rheumatism; and if they did, they were fortunate in the selection, and found the bargain a lame one, and one that would prove impervious, even to an embrocation purchased at a heavy discount.

The place around was called the golden chambers, and the little cells were dignified with the name of offices; but of all offices, either was the least calculated to do an extensive business in; and never was it known that a burglar passed by, without turning up his nose at the dungeonly appearance of things.

"Porker, my dear sir, take a seat; this note may want an answer," said the tall broker; "smoke, my friend, first rate primeros—how is business?"

"Too much to do," said Mr. Porker, shaking his epistolary head; "but tell me how can you make out with such a hole as this, twelve feet square?"

"Why don't you know, Porker, my friend?" returned the tall broker. "God bless you, my friend, I do my business out doors. I like the air for business; give me the sunshine and I'll lift the Morris Canal, including the Russian loan, in twenty-four hours. I wish I had your capital, what a stockquake I'd create."

"Ah! you may well wish," said Mr. Porker; "you can't, my dear sir, begin a calculation, and hope to live long enough to conclude it, of our stupendous concern."

"Now, Porker, my friend," said the tall broker, shaking his head, and laughing like a man after canvas back, backed by sherry and champagne—

"My dear sir," said Porker, rising majestically, "remember, I'm the confidential clerk."

"So you are, you've told me so a dozen times; and what a stupid fellow I am to forget it. Porker, I beg pardon," said the tall broker, holding out his hand.

"Oh! no necessity between gentlemen," said Mr. Porker, "but our firm, sir, is a tremendous team."

"And you're so damn'd systematic," said the long broker, "no man can get ahead of you. Porker, I suspect—recollect, mere suspicion—that you infuse considerable spirit in the vast operations of that mill."

"My dear sir," said Mr. Porker, feeling the remark of the tall broker, "dine with me at Delmo's."

"I will, of course, at half-past three," returned the tall broker; "but recollect, I'm very abstemious."

"Certainly," said Porker, "no force—blank shot—a mere formal thing—substantial."

"That will suit me precisely," said the long broker; until which time I'll try and work off some Coney Island scrip on time; for between you and I and that patriotic place, time only will make its sand-bank worth a farthing or a franc on the dollar."

Mr. Porker had an invariable habit of asking people to dine with him, even although his acquaintance with the honored party may have been recent. Whenever the person invited attended at the hour appointed, he was seated at the table of Delmo's, a large restaurateur, where it was said an egg could be cooked and served up in fifteen different styles, all essentially different; and a bunch of sausages, in thirty several modes, and that nine times out of ten, the original ingredient would be wholly absorbed by the superincumbent collateral masses, that were deeply imbued with the pungent sting of spices. If no person dined with Mr. Porker, he might be seen at a cheaper chop-house, taking the plain English cookery so much more befitting a man of sedentary habits. After Mr. Porker finished his steak and glass of beer, he would fall into a deep reverie in regard to the combined talents of his firm, and especially the golden partner, and finish his abstraction, by rapping his fist on the table, and then rising slowly, pronounce the words "perfect genius," while the waiter, hearing the rap, would jump to the table, and when the two words were uttered, inform the rapper that it "wasn't on the bill of fare:" then Mr. Porker would look at the waiter, and bury his face in his handkerchief, and laugh at his own want of thought!

Mr. Porker reached the office of the celebrated firm as the great premier was moving from the premises. Shortly afterwards, the stock leviathan, Mr. Grasp, and his friend, Mr. Gripe, with gloves and canes, and erect carriage, passed out, and saluting in their course the nobles of the vaulted corporations, called Presidents and Cashiers; and then Mr. Grip, and then the polite Mr. Porker, esteemed by all for his genial suavity that seems a peculiar gift to some favored men.

Then others, the lesser gems of the great financial mints, walked on their way, from the cloudy and sullen face of the exhausted first teller, down to the porter and the porter's vicegerent, and the deputy of the latter; and these include the whole mass of discount, note and assistant clerks, and runners and messengers, and book and blotter balancers,

who shot like hungry stars from the brick banking piles and moneyed buildings, eager to find a culinary atmosphere, and shine as long as a good appetite afforded its twinkle. Then, mixed among these, were sundry lawyers from the same golden avenue, and all their clerks and students, who gather around the money centre, as if with a knowledge that where there is so much roguery, there must be correctors, advisers, and legal crutches for lame fiscalite ducks; and about the hour of five, by the half-rung bells of Coffee-house slip, the great field of action, where bears and bulls often charge with spirit, and struggle through the day's campaign with the loss of perspiration and some bad debts, would be nearly deserted.

Here and there might be observed a wounded Bull, and sometimes a few limping Bears, making, as it were, the rear-guard of the great street division; who, if fortunate, although wounded in the skirmish, and nearly killed in the metallic forays, might still be resuscitated and renovated, if fed "on time," and afforded the plaster, known to the surgeons of the discounters by the name of "compromise."

It was the case sometimes, and might be, in ordinary dealings, one calculated to enlist the sympathies of all dealers in silk paper, that these plasters were not applied or tried; and this occurred frequently, especially when a Bear was disabled to such a degree as to show conclusively that he had been trampled under foot by Bulls of good stock; and moreover, had a "sore head," which, in the list of the wounded combatants, was well known to mean that consumptive thing called "utter insolvency!"

When a Bear with this unfortunate mark was seen, inflicted during the dernier scratch of a tremendous battle, he appeared like a lonesome wanderer, a solitary recruit of the suffering rear-guard, with limping pace, halting step, and muttering lip, whispering to the silent notes that hung around the banks, that as Coney Island scrip would not save him; being the last files of his paper reserves, he must pack up his book and pen, take down his name, and leave his neighbors to pay his rent and dinner-bill! and tell the solemn tale, that at midnight, when the wind was fair and the tide willing, he had G. T. T. B.—which in all circles were silently recognized as the initial diminutives of—Genius Travelling To Bankruptcy!

Tears might have been shed, by Presidents, Cashiers and discount committees, on beholding one so destitute and deserted by all who had plucked a golden hair from his gilded hide. It was enough to draw drops—not mint-drops—even from the stony heart of a banking-house, in all the hardness of its granite, when the last of the belligerent guard appeared, like some ghost of a pave-broker, who had to gaze upon his fiscal subterranity swept away by the fire of "time," that scorched all his own, and all that he could borrow from others; and who could not hesitate a moment, but was forced to seek another location, where, as an "agent"—which means a man's other self—he might recover his standing in the army of speculators, and take his commission, and exercise his quaint and sharp genius for the benefit of recruits in general, and the grand division of corporators in particular.

If a Bull appeared in the same plight, gouged, excoriated and hornless, it seemed to enlist the same amount of sympathy, and his exit was as sudden and final as a Bear's; though there were times when, instead of emigrating to a land of promise, they walked, with the aid of a legal crutch, through the Insolvent Court, and then re-appeared upon the money-pave, with new horns, and hides, and tails, and everything—but money to pay their old debts!

CHAPTER XV.

Lob Teershedder, Esq., and a sketch of visiters to an awful old lady, a Palmister of rare revelations.

The Captain was sitting, smoking his evening segar, in the modest parlor of Mrs. Seiser, in company with that lady and her two children, the ladies who ordinarily made themselves heard within the same circle being absent; and he was explaining the reasons that induced him to decline the offers of the banker for the small property in England. "In the first place," said the Captain, "the value of the shares may shortly be greater than the amount which has been offered here; and as I have a friend residing near the situation of the property, to whom all the shares can be conveyed, except those of the banker and Mr. Augustus Seiser, we may sell there for the largest price. The three shares, united with mine, will, if exposed for sale near the premises, command a higher price, and the transfer will be easy from my friend to a purchaser. Mr. Edward having charged me with the disposal of his interest, I have directed a deed to be made, which, after execution, can be forwarded to my correspondent, who will attend my commands."

"Well, I say as you does, Captin," observed Mrs. Seiser; "as long as we're not in want of bread, I spose, it'll do."

"Leave it to me," said the Captain; "I think I can make it produce more than the banker's offer and interest besides. I've not heard from him since the lawyer was here the other evening, who looked somewhat surprised at our refusal to sell."

"I shouldn't wonder an' they were both sharpers," said Mrs. Seiser.

"A lawyer and a banker are a good span to draw in the harness of barter and sale," responded the Captain.

"I'm sure I don't want any thing to do with such sharpers, and I told Madam Pump never to marry a lawyer, if she had another offer from the men."

"No danger," answered the Captain, "no lawyer will ever distress her with a warrant or himself."

"You don't know, Captain, the expictation of a widder woman like Madam Pump, for another chance man don't die till life dies; 'specially as she's a frencher."

"That, of course," said the Captain, "hope of a husband is always in a woman's eye; and hence its brightness."

A knock at the small door of the parlor was made by a stranger, and the Captain having invited the man in, the latter entered, and proved to be the chief clerk and vocal assistant of Thomas Scrape and Samuel Crisp, during their peregrinations round the broad city, with shell-fish and other kinds of marine merchandise.

His name was Lob Teershedder; and it was supposed that so he was called from the fact that he always appeared to have one or more, and sometimes a half dozen, large round tears coursing over the convex surface of his eye-balls. He stood, when erect, which might have been once during a year, six feet high, though ordinarily none would pronounce him five. He wore a hat that, a half score of years before he obtained it, had lingered in the second hand region of Abraham's bosom; a coarse canvas trousers, and old boots, whose soles had polished the round paving stones in all weathers, and a mustee colored shirt, that had clung to his back since the days of auld lang syne, and so used was he to it, and so much did he think of the cotton garment, that the tears started to his peepers instantaneously, the moment a thought crossed his mind that now and then, once at least in a year, it ought to be made to undergo the infinite variety of grabs, and turnings, and rubbings, and sousings, and clenchings, and twirlings, and twistings, and soakings, and rinsings, and dryings—generally performed by a woman called a laundress. But never could Mr. Lob be persuaded to doff the domestic garment, for the healthy purpose of lustration; and after many washers in the neighborhood had guessed until tired, for some reason that induced Lob to let it grow yellow on his back, it was discovered a case familiar to a great many people in this world, who wear "dickies," viz: that he had no other to supply its place with, while that favorite one would be passing the perils of the wash-tub. His mouth was thrown over on his left cheek by a gradual inclination of the muscles of his face, supposed to have been wrought by the incessant cry of "Rockaway sand-clams," in all weathers, both night and day, and during a series of twelve years. His left hand and arm were useless, and hung in a semicircle like so much dead flesh, the remains of a member that had been struck and shriveled by paralysis. He was lame in the knee and club-footed, and therefore only fit to creep behind the wagon of Mr. Crisp, with a huge lantern, uttering the well-known solo of the clam-minstrels. How he lived none could tell, for it frequently happened that his nunchion was formed of six cold clams and a ship-biscuit; for the mastication of which he had a set of teeth far superior to those of a patent sweep, all white and unimpaired, except when too much Lorillardian fluid threw its envious yellow over the grinding family, unmatched by those in the gums of a grandee.

"Captain," muttered Teershedder, "Sam vonts a vord wid ye, down at the boat-builder's, if ye kin spare time."

"What is it about, sir, do you know?"

"Vy, no, I don't; ony I was to ax you to cum," said Mr. Teershedder.

"Tell 'im I'll come in a few minutes, Lob."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Teershedder, sliding out, and through the yard, in a gait peculiarly his own, and regardless of everybody and thing, and dwelling only on the distant prospect of an enlivening dram.

The Captain repaired to the spot as directed by the messenger, and found Mr. Crisp smoking a cheap segar.

"Well, Sam," said the Captain, "have they touched you with a warrant or a summons?"

"Nothing of that sort, sir," said Sam, "but there's been some minoovering round here, and for me life I can't fathom it."

"Give me the particulars, Sam," said the Captain, "and perhaps I can judge of the thing."

"You recollect the other night," said Sam, "a chap cum up to your house to talk on business."

"Certainly, a lawyer from below."

"No doubt—low enough," said Sam, interrupting the Captain.

"I meant from town, Sam," resumed the Captain.

"Well," observed Sam, "that chap was in talkin' with you; but there was another outdoors waitin for 'im, and the face of the outdoor one I got pretty pat. The other night, at Bungspunger's dance, I and Tom was lookin' on, and who should I see but this same fellow drinkin' with Jim and St. Barts; and just like old eelers, he payin' for all the likkwer; by and by they went up stairs in a pri-

rate room, Bungspunger and all, and staid till midnight. The next day they all shoved off from the pint, and Jim and the Blacksnake, St. Barts, come home at twelve o'clock, in new second hand suits; and afterwards paid McNoddy and me all they owed: now wot the devil, Captin, could them chaps do to git over twenty dollars?"

"Why what odd ones the jolly tiplers are," observed the Captain, "some good job must have benefited 'em."

"Some infernal dark one," said Sam.

"Don't you think you could worm it out of the Lawyer?" asked the Captain.

"I tried once," observed Sam, "but he was as close as the lips of an oyster."

"He wasn't, perhaps, fully soaked," suggested Capt. J.

"No, but he is now; and I can go and try 'im, and let you know of the upshot," said Sam, walking over towards the wooden tenement of Alexander Bungspunger, being the sign of the Jolly Tars. Mr. Crisp found on his bench, and deeply intent upon the game of dominos, the funny Lawyer Jim, with his co-lodger, the equally excited St. Barts; giving the former a hint, he followed Sam from the bar-room, and the moment he breathed the atmospheric air, the poor Lawyer felt a double spin of the entire contents of his pericranium. Supported by Sam until they reached a neighboring log, both took a seat; and Sam opened his business with a sanguine expectation that Jim must, in his present state, turn his budget of knowledge inside out: but Sam had not even the shrewdness of the other, and found himself wholly disappointed.

"Come, Jim, tell us where did you stay all day in that boat, when you and the Saint went off?" said Sam.

"Ha, ha!" shouted Jim, "by the ghost of 'er constitution, you play the twelve vidders, ha, Sammy Sampson?" and then the Lawyer hiccoughed, and laughed alternately, and nearly choked himself.

"Cum, Jim," continued Sam, "I'll give y' twelve tickits to the "Rummy Theatre," to see Richard; where was you all that day?"

"Roller and Richy—I'll see yer dam' first—by the ghost of Sammy Clam, who's spinnin' my head round? an the Richard did rake," uttered Jim, half singing.

"Well, here; go back, but stop 'till you want money, and then see who'll lend," said Sam.

"Which can—sed hearts—of Britain—to quake," continued Jim, endeavoring to sing; and as if wholly unconscious of the presence of any person.

Mr. Crisp, finding his endeavors vain to glean from Jim any secret of any kind, led him back to the Jolly Tars; and taking a seat and lighting the remainder of his segar, Sam soliloquized mentally on the strong powers of rum, that seemed to have stupified or sealed the intelligence of Jim.

After the Captain returned to the house, he revolved in his own mind all that Sam had said, and thought there must be something not understood by himself, in process of completion; but whether it was a thing good, bad, or interesting to him, he could not divine; it would be well, he thought, to learn all he could of the movements of the landlord of the Jolly Tars, and his lodgers on the free list; and that could be done by Sam. The person who had called on business from the banker, had behaved like a gentleman; was easy in his manners, and did not make an effort to persuade Mrs. Seiser or her niece to dispose of their rights after they had declined; and he was a man, too, whom the Captain could not recognize, so slight was his attention to the Lawyer's appearances; observing, at the time, no prominent mark about his person that would afford an easy mean of subsequent recognition. The man seen by Sam Crisp had not been seen by the Captain, and that person might have been left in the street by design; but what could it amount to? It must be thought of, reasoned the Captain; and in the mean time I will get the papers executed, and send them off, in order, if possible, to prevent overreaching, which is far better than detecting the overreacher.

When the Captain entered the house, he found Madam La Pump in possession of her family dog, and Miss Angelica Seiser, and also Miss Hetty Crimp, a young lady of sixteen and a half, with a most volatile little eye, and always ready for a prolonged laugh, upon any terms the company choose to impose. She was also a semstress, and often worked in company with Angelica, when any job promised a trifle over the penurious rates allowed by the cold-hearted slop-venders, for whom they labored day and night, and received a trifle.

All the ladies were bonneted and veiled, and wore shawls; and it was plain to the Captain that some visit more than ordinary was to be made.

"Why didn't you tell me?" said the Captain; "I lately parted with Sam, and he would have walked with you."

"No, no," said Angelica, "we wouldn't have him on any terms. We wouldn't have the Lord Mayor."

"No," said Madam, "not Napoleon le Grand."

"You would not go without Nappo, the small?" said the Captain.

"Oh! nevair," said Madam, hugging the small dog. "Resté ici, Nappo, resté," added Madam.

"Lor', Captin," said Miss Hetty, "we wouldn't even have you."

"There's slander," said the Captain; "hear ye, hear ye"—

And Miss Hetty did hear, and she shrunk back, bent nearly double, and laughed continuously, and at the same time seemed as happy as if she were in a garden of wild and blooming flowers, and saw in every sun-beam a beam of pure and touching wit.

"Well," said the Captain, "if you're going to look for a beau, be it so; run along, and if the watchman does trouble any one, don't cry about it—that's all."

"No danger," said Angelica, "the watch are not so fond of trouble."

"Oh, we vill run all de 'azards," said Madam.

"By the bye," said the Captain, "what has become of Mr.—Mr.—the gentleman that came to sit a-while with you, Madam La Pump? that still—silent man."

"Monsieur Barkins," said Madam; "he come sometime."

"He is a queer beau," said the Captain; "may I dive deep, if he don't out-sit in silence any sweet-heart"—

"Oh, pooh, pooh; he is no beau," said Madam.

"Oh my—did I ever!" said Miss Hetty Crimp, breaking into her series of mild laughter, and enjoying it so well that every nerve in her little brains seemed attuned.

"No, indeed, Mr. Barkins is no beau," said Madam La Pump; looking very much as if she regretted the fact.

"Here is Washington, ladies; take him along," said the Captain.

"Indeed, Captain, we don't want any one at all," said Angelica.

"Oh, very well, with all my heart," said the Captain.

"Now gals," said the good Mrs. Seiser, "vy not take somebody? only think, to run through the streets, and all alone—night-to-body, ven I was young!"

"La, la; why, there's no danger, nor more than in day-walks," said Angelica.

"None vatever; I securita, madam," said Madam La Pump, in earnest.

"Oh fildle-de-dee," said Mrs. Seiser; "there, go along; and I don't care if the watch doos git you."

"Oh Lor', ve'll run the risk of that," said Miss Hetty.

"Well, good night," said the Captain; "if we don't hear of you, we'll conclude that you've gone to Coney Island, that being the only land of promise left on earth."

The ladies made their adieus, and closing the door after them, walked at a rapid pace through the streets, and turned sundry corners; all on the very tip-toe of expectation as to the news to be gathered at the place of their intended visit.

"Now, vere kin they be goin'?" said Mrs. Seiser.

"That's the question," responded the Captain.

"For some new ribbon," suggested Mrs. Seiser.

"Cheap morocco shoes," said the Captain.

"Horse-skin gloves at half price," returned Mrs. Seiser.

"A finger-ring for Miss Hetty," rejoined the Captain.

"Oh," said Mrs. Seiser, "I shouldn't wonder"—

"What?" said the Captain.

"If little Ben had the night-mare; look at him," said Mrs. Seiser.

"Mommy! mommy!" cried Benjamin Franklin, dreaming that a large hog was on his head, and starting up, to ask his mother to drive it away.

The three ladies with rapid paces continued their journey, Miss Hetty being in the centre, and flanked on one side by Miss Angelica, and on the other by Madam La Pump and her little snowy pug. They were bound for the house of a very singular lady, who presumed to tell fortunes with astonishing accuracy, and whose modern sisters in the art sometimes style themselves "ladies of information," and "ladies who can be consulted on any subject." These names are the inventions of modern charlatans, the old soubriquet being the well-known one of "Fortune Teller;" although it frequently occurs that the amount of information gleaned from the feminine oracles has but a slender claim even to the shaded fortune whose unreal spirit is the gilded cloud of a pleasing dream. Madam La Pump and the Angel had had this visit in contemplation for a length of time, and were determined to stay until they could gain admittance to the fortune-teller this evening; no matter how long they would be compelled to wait and take their chances, even until the discharge of those who unluckily arrived before them. A long confidential debate was had between Madam and Miss Angelica, as to the propriety of admitting Miss Hetty Crimp to accompany them; and after due consideration, it was agreed that Miss Hetty should be of the party, and have her "fortune told;" but they imposed a caution upon the little maid against the whisper of a single word; and drew from her a promise to remain as silent as the grave in regard to the visit, and all that should be gleaned from the lips of the prophetic lady.

Madam Tag was well known all over the eastern section of the city as a fortune-teller, and report among the ladies who patronized her efforts, gave her the name of a talented adept of the black art; and hence the extensive patronage she received, not only from the young, but from some of the more advanced angels of the social circle. The house occupied by the fortune-teller was in

Allen, near Hester street, in the rear of a small wooden building two stories high, including the attic, with its gable-end to the street. The front and rear buildings were always yellow, are so now, and have an alley at the southern side for the ingress of visitors to the rear domicil: the front one to this day being occupied by a family in the genteel calling of a green grocer. In the back building were two rooms, the one for the reception of all the company indiscriminately, and the other for the single files, being the great sanctuary where the black art was known and practised by the Gallic Madam Tag, who was the high-priestess of the confidential altar.

The ante-room had a dozen chairs, a sombre rag carpet, and a bureau upon which was placed a candle called a three-penny, by the lady in the grocery, which burned its tallow in gloomy silence, and often exhibited a snuff two inches in length, as if a witch were preserving it with unseen care, in order to clean her teeth with it before the neighboring cocks crew for day-light.

The large back room, the hall of audience of the charming old lady, where she practised her solemn art, was furnished with more taste, and had a greater quantity of furniture. The chairs were five degrees above Windsor, the carpet was ingrain, with huge circles, whose outlines were nearly outscraped, it having been stamped under foot for many years before Madam Tag had forced it to do a passive duty in her oracular chambers. The mantel-piece was filled with odd-shaped sea-shells, large and small, and so placed as to create the impression that fortunes could be told with every one of them, with an accuracy that would open the eyes even of the gods and godesses, who are preserved in the saltish palace of Neptune. Among the shells were two mammoth clam-shells, white and polished, whose former internals had been devoured by some politician at a single meal, who had learned the art of feeding himself at the expense of the public! and these shells were so placed, relatively, with six shining darning-needles, as to give the impression that the latter were also used for the purpose of aiding Madam Tag, when knitting the web of the future by her mental labors. There hung also in the room two strong wire cages, with cross and circular wires for the rest or swing of the occupiers, and in each cage was a jet-black parrot, large and lazy, each of which spoke a few words in French, and also in the English tongue. These black birds were the darkest and most striking features suspended in the temple of the foreshower; with both of which the latter often held a colloquy, not more than half a dozen words being understood by the patient sitter before the fortune-teller; and the gibberish thus articulated, often imposed upon the credulity of the young heads and lively hearts who adventured to the house for a touch of the mysterious sciences. Branches of coralline were placed in the hearth, almost invisible in the rays of the small lamp used by Madam Tag, which was placed upon a table in company with cards, and cups, and books, all within reach of the lady, who reposed in an arm-chair, silent, solemn-looking, and with eyes that pierced the customer. There were other domestic adornments disposed of around the room, nearly all of which seemed to be placed in a position the result of calculation in the singular and shrewd mind of the palmistress; and upon his little roost, in a small cage, might have been seen a light yellow Canary bird, with his eyes closed, his bill under the wing, and patient and unmurmuring at the loss of his liberty; which had deprived him of the free air that circled the flowery home of the path wherein his fellows were wild and joyful.

The three ladies, Madam, Miss Angelica and Miss Hetty, arrived at the house we have endeavored to describe, and passing through the short alley, they were met by an attendant, who gave them seats in the ante-room, and whispering, "you must take your turn," left them.

In the room were several ladies waiting for the "turn" hinted at by the attendant, some of whom had been seated for an hour and more, as silent as worshippers, and with patience truly exemplary.

All the ladies wore thick black or green veils, and which could not be penetrated so as to distinguish the features of the wearers: some disguised themselves whenever they deemed it necessary to consult the Gallic lady, and hence her run of custom was most profitable at night. It was not only the young that came from idle motives, or some other frivolous cause, but there were others, who had a notion that something might be told to them, which, by a comparison with circumstances already transpired, might actually create a thing in the future worthy of present belief. Curiosity is a very sharp thing in man, but it appears to be of the very finest edge in woman; and granting that the judgment would condemn certain projected means for its satisfaction, still it avoids, by its keenness, the cold moral of the mind, and ventures to have itself satisfied or subdued.

In the ante-room among the eight sitters not a word was uttered, except in an undistinguishable whisper; none venturing to trust a tone of the voice before so many who might —we state it problematically—be able to talk of it, with all the garrulity of a veiled prophet. There was a young lady in the company, who had at least three young men to "keep her company," or in other words, who paid some such civilities to her as induce the maidens,

now-a-days, to report around among their elders—for what young lady will acknowledge herself older than another? none—that all the three young men had serious intentions, although neither belonged to the church! and being so beset by the three, the idea occurred to her, that a visit to Madam Tag would clear the case of all difficulties, and actually point out the real Simon—though not perhaps Pure—who was destined to buy a ring and force it on the finger, and then make his declaration, and grow impatient for an answer, and take her out in a chair and horse to Harlæm, and give her sherry at Manhattanville, and take her to the play to see Romeo and Juliet, and to the Circus to see the Clown swallow a wash-tub, with all the family linen in it; and then to call in the afternoon—a certain forerunner of a very serious thing—and then go to the minister's—a certain forerunner of a more serious thing—viz: a knot tied for life, which, unlike the ancient knot, is not to be cut, save by the sickle of Time himself. Now, how could this young lady, in the very middle of that beautiful region called the "teens"—which among ladies means from thirteen to twenty-six, both inclusive—know anything of all these matters, unless she could get some intimation from Madam Tag as to the identity of the right man? How could she make any calculations as to the lucky—we must be cautious—or unlucky individual, who, having the real bona fide intention of marrying, was entitled to the greatest share of her attentions, the greatest number of her smiles, and pats upon the cheek, and snaps of the pocket handkerchief, with which young ladies in their teens, and—we are bound to be cautious—some over their teens, plague their particular—very particular friend? No, she could not tell; and being impatient to know, she had called—this visit was the third—to ascertain, if possible, who among her three gallants was most likely to beg the privilege to hold her little hand in the durance of time-honored wedlock.

Perhaps, however, she was a poor good girl, working industriously with her needle for the bare support of the day, and the little finery that shows itself before the Sabbath face of a minister; one impoverished and disheartened by the grasping Jew, and worse Christian, for whom she labored through the day, and far over in the evening hours, to earn a mere pittance; while the employer laughed at the misery of the feeble, and felt proud in his accumulated gold, won from the weak of earth. She might have been such, and went to know, if possible, when her labor would be lessened, and she should be, in all probability, no longer alone, but under the protection of a strong arm and manly spirit, whose pride and power would release her from the sordid employer, who took the sweat of her beautiful young brow, and cheated her of her reward!

There she sat, patient, and watching with a beating heart. How sweet is the tone of that heart that beats in the bosom of the young and pure woman! how tender the strings that quiver with the sounds of hope! how true are those sounds to nature! the tone is all purity; the breath of the summer heaven is not more sweet; the petal of the delicate rose trembles not oftener; it is as gentle as the star-beam that comes to earth to smile in its brightness. How hard the hand that would deal harshly with it, and scatter it on life's road—blighted and broken!

There was another and more elderly lady sitting next to the one last mentioned, evidently disguised, and with a dark veil through which the evil eye itself could not penetrate so as to detect a single feature. She was a lady of the kind generally known as charitable, who run for many days, not only in her own surrounding neighborhood, but far over the city, to get subscribers for a missionary society in aid of men who go to preach the gospel to people who could not be taught moral or religious instruction in an hundred years! Sometimes it occupied her a whole week to gather together a couple of dollars to effectuate the object of the society, and its one hundred auxiliaries; while her own family were more in want of her time and matronly attentions, than were the colored people in want of books they never could comprehend, even with the study of a long octagenarian life. This lady was also a member of another missionary society, and a life-member too, whose name was in the printed list of members, and on a page where the dog-ear had remained to mark the spot, since the first day of the book's reception. Then, again, she was a member of a mite society, and the first secretary thereof, and attended the monthly meetings, and it was said—we must be cautious, it was merely insinuated—that she delivered a long argumentative lecture, in which she beautifully exemplified the great maxim of Dr. Franklin, by merely observing that if every member of the society would throw a pin in a small box every day, Sundays not excepted, the end of the year would produce as many groats as there were members. All the members received this lecture with great admiration, and some were so liberal as to take the pins from the interior shawls of the minors of the least age, and throw them into the general fund; and these pins constituted the entire gift of the members for the whole year; they depending on adventive and voluntary charity for any sensible augmentation to the slim treasury of their small society.

She was also a member of "the auxiliary society, instituted for ameliorating the moral

and physical condition of people on the confines of Africa, with dark skins, protuberating lips, and well-known solidity of heel;" and this society being a branch, met once a week, and collected dues, and voluntary gifts, and free subscriptions, that were sent off in a mass to the burning shores of Africa, to be wasted in a vain endeavor to teach a savage race of people a foreign tongue; while the members of the society, and the donors of all this money, had poor people and small children in their own neighborhood, lifting their hands up in the coldness of dreary winter, and asking with piteous tone why the hardy black in his own sunny home was preferred to them; and why the former received, and the solicitors were compelled to cast their voice for charity out into the tempest of a winter's day, with a heart as bleak as the coldness of the singing wind?

The lady was also a member of "the association for the improvement of morals in the poorer classes;" and to this society she was very attentive and very watchful; and nothing at her own home, nor indeed at any other house where she visited, passed by; no word, or conversation, or act, but that was compared with the most exact and critical patience, and subjected to the moral ordeal. The moral law was the foundation, and certain rules were the superstructures raised thereon, by which all that was said and done were considered and adjudged, condemned or approved.—There was a strictness in the manners and speech of people required, that really laid the whole family of mankind under a most cumbrous load; not even excepting the members themselves, and one, too, that poor human nature could not support, and that would weigh down and crush a cherub, if subjected to the heavy and strict impositions. When discretion is no longer suffered to aid the judgment, the feelings of certain people, even in a good cause, will exact observances unfitted to our present state as members of society in general; such people, endeavoring to exact more virtue from mankind than they ever possessed, discover afterwards that the contact has been with fallen nature, and not the cleansed nature of angels.

Belonging to such a society of catharists, whose scrupulous adherence to the most rigid maxims was arbitrary, this lady had had the misfortune to lose three silver tea-spoons, which had been in her family and the family of her mother and two grand-mothers. They had descended to her, it may be said, by virtue of three last wills and testaments; and they were prized far above their intrinsic value, as gifts from her ancestors. She had in her family as servant-maid Miss Tulip Niddy, who certainly appeared very honest, and had been reckoned so since her first day of service; but this lady, however, like a thousand others, the moment a thing was determined a lost one, suspected the servants in the first place, as if a servant must necessarily be dishonest if anything be stolen.

In most instances the lowest servant suffers in reputation, then the keenness of suspicion glances to the next, and afterwards to a third; and then another question suggests itself to the mind, ever active when petty larceny is in the house, it might be all three? It is seldom suspicion is thrown upon any but servants, as if dishonesty and servitude in the domestic kitchen were bound by birth and undissevered by time! How often it occurs that others are guilty, and not the servitor; and should it not be a caution, not too soon to suspect the laborious because they are poor and friendless; reflecting upon the solemn truth, that God has given to the poor in this world only a name! The suspicion of the lady was fixed upon Tulip Niddy, the servant-girl: the former had said nothing about it, and accused nobody; but her reflections were such, and her real grief for the loss so great, that she was determined even to visit Madam Tag, and try the virtue of the black art in her endeavors to discover the lost spoons. Who could cast censure even upon that member of the moral society, in using all means to relieve her mind from the suspicion she could not resist, and to recover her small articles? none can blame the motive; and if her resource, the fortune-teller, was rather a questionable one, still it was making an effort that might have a tendency to exculpate the suspected.

She sat in the ante-room silent, and waiting with anxiety; now thinking of the moral then the mite, then the missionary society, and then the silver spoons, diminutive made in the old Dutch style, and marked with the initials of the maiden name of her great great grand mother. And there she tarried, until the attendant requested her company in the grand room with three small words, "your turn, marm." The lady who sat next to the member of the moral society was a widow, who kept a genteel boarding-house in one of the short streets leading to the East River: she was about thirty-five years of age, very pretty, and genteel in figure, and walk, and conversation; she had only two children, and kept about a dozen gentlemen boarders, whose daily business was transacted in that vicinity. Frequently a pretty young relative would make a visit for some time at the house, ostensibly to aid in sundry small matters, but really to get a husband if possible from among the gallant sitters at the house table; and often the object was effectuated with very small pains, and only the trouble of condescending to be made happy.

Now the lady who kept the boarding-house might wish to get a good husband, and then

again—we must be cautious—she might not: be this, if possible, a problem: she had a miniature of herself, which had been admired, of course, though not in a very marked manner by any one in particular. It was in the parlor, and was seen there, and was supposed to be there when it was required by the lady herself; but when search was made for it, it was among the lost things. Inquiries were made of every body, from the servants to the least curious among the gentlemen, but all in vain, the miniature could not be found. Here was a perplexity in the mind of a lady, pretty, not incumbered with too many heirs, and of social lively mind, but well guarded. Who could have the miniature? Mr. Crone had certainly been in several evenings and read the paper, but, Lord, he was very distant; Mr. Johnsfather had been to church several times, but his gallantry was as serious as the day; Mr. Thump had joked considerable, and always had a predilection to sit next to herself, but he was a confirmed bachelor, that is, a man who paid his own debts, and had no coin to spare for a wife's! There was no one other to be suspected—none. What could it mean? a gentleman must have it; the servants could not take a miniature; that was out of all fair surmises. There she would sit at her table pouring out the nut-brown coffee, and smiling on all with many a joke about the miniature; but after all her efforts to discover the abstracter of that little picture proved abortive. What was to be done? leave it until time should unfold the mystery? time is a dull sluggard; and then he is so uncertain in making known his stores; especially those that would quiet the mind, and put an end to female suspense. No, that will not do, thought the lady; and thinking further, and laughing at the queer notion, she determined to consult the lady in whose ante-room she found herself on this evening. She also waited patiently, and by sundry furtive glances endeavored to ascertain who surrounded her; but all in deep dark veils, were silent in their undiscovered security; and as to judging from the dresses on the patient and silent ladies, it would have proved as difficult as to discover honesty in the robes that run through life, on the backs of keen men, who never wear their own habits.

CHAPTER XVI.

Relating to visiters in the room of the Gallic artist.

We continue the curious portraits left by the abrupt termination of the last chapter unfinished in the ante-room of Madam Tag, the whisperer of confidential and sublime nothings. There was another lady sitting among the silent group, older than any other person in the room, and of a very superstitious mind; and also a believer in witchcraft, because witches were frequently named in her Bible, which was a very old one, with brass fastenings. The old lady believed in dreams, and in evil and good spirits; and sometimes she sat for hours ruminating upon what had appeared to her in her midnight sleep; and if it were a thing to be identified in the most remote degree, and even when viewed through the deceiving medium of a feeble memory, with a concurring passage in the family Scriptures, it formed a subject of contemplation many a long winter's night, when the domestic affairs were completed, and before the old clock uttered its warning of the near approach of the retiring hour. Her husband was a small man, round as a barrel of beer, not much higher, and not half as lively, but of equal froth as regarded all his mental showings. He was in fact nearly mindless, and doubled his old wife's store of superstition by the quantity he had gathered during a long life. When any new sect or itinerant preacher, or essayist, or lecturer, came to the city, the old couple were sure to be among the first patrons of the theological or nonsensical innovation, and apparently believed in all the newly pronounced doctrine, or the original and wonderful tenets, whether emanating from the fair lips of a lady, or the notes of a male vagrant whose worldly goods had gone for ever.

But the old couple were deserted instanter, the moment it was advertised that a newer doctrine would be spoken or sung by any foreign insolvent, no matter what the amount of his song's burden; and thus the curious old pair seemed to take pleasure in aiding the pennyless pioneers in the narrow path of salvation, without regard to the constituent principles that formed the basis of the most recent creed; and it may be considered wonderful that the feeble couple, the eternal runners after the newest comer, should never hesitate, notwithstanding the rain might threaten a huge freshet, or absolutely come down and soak their mantles, to go to the room where the thorny path of charcoal hue was to be illuminated by the twinkling genius, who pounded, expounded, and sometimes with enthusiastic energy, actually pounded with his fist.

Snow might fall with the gentle force of the floating feathers, or the hardier hail might batter the sky-light of the denizen, and even the foul breath of the rude wind might almost tear the old lady from the arm of her companion, but still out they went, and dodged the wet snow-flakes, and felt the pattering of the intruding drops, and pushed onward beneath the glimmer of the city lamps,

that only made darkness a little darker, until the twain arrived at the school, or long, or private room, where the brand-new prophet, or beautiful prophetess, with a new creed, was to be heard and believed by all the ladies, and paid a penny by every male recipient of the tongue's inventive harangue.

There had recently arrived into this humbugged city, a lady preacher, a female minister, or a bishop of the soft gender, or a prophetess—we are sure she was *one* of these—who advertised in "The Copper Honeycomb," a small newspaper of the current day, that she would lecture on the next Sabbath evening, in a well-known room engaged for the express purpose of echoing the tender notes of her little throat. This advertisement was read over and again by the old man, and clipped out of the little paper and carefully laid in the hymn-book, as a sort of remembrancer of the portentous event; and, indeed, it was a matter of felicitation both to the old lady and her husband; for in the way of divinity and doctrine—strange as it may *now* seem—the aged pair had had nothing recent to keep their wandering thoughts replete with the right kind of grave novelty. But here was an epoch in the passage of worshipping years; here was a theological demonstrator, in hat, and shawl, and petticoats; yes, with what an animated manner did old Katy tell her husband, that a woman—one of her own sex—aye, a lady, was to preach—only think, what a double novelty there was to be—an entire new creed, in want of believers, and an entire new preacher, in want of money! and that preacher a woman—one of the female sex—we must be cautious—perhaps fair sex!

Well, upon the advertised evening, the quiet, peaceful Sabbath evening—which we love and can tell why: we can wander about on that eve, and think and soliloquize without the roar of a noisy world interposing its harshness; we meet no money-lender, nor borrower, nor maker, nor foot-pad with temper on his brow and coarseness in his voice; nor drunkard shaming even the beggar's garb; nor loud-mouthed blasphemy, nor reckless boy, entering the polluted path of guilty manhood, with compeers of the wild school of mental deformity: but the night path is comparatively quiet, and the unroused gratings of the boisterous voices of commerce, and of her circle of living figures, are hushed and calm; like their worldly thoughts, which seem to slumber upon a day of rest, when the heart reposes out of the vortex of toil, and in its haven of domestic joy—

Upon that designated evening, only disturbed by the lofty tones of the steeple bells, out went the old couple in search of the room where the lady preacher was to make her pioneer lecture, and examine the solemn faces of the curious, who went with the expectation of hearing something new, and full as curious as their own experimenting selves. On the two adventurers crept with most commendable activity, although the wind was a little troublesome and somewhat keen for aged brows; and although the travelers were threatened with several overthrows, from stumbling, and a continuous palpitation of the heart. They reached the long room, however, in safety, and entered and took seats near the spot where the female saint or prophetess was to stand high in her own opinion, and in the opinion of the eager listeners; although she confessed herself to be a lowly servant in a good cause. The old visiters neared the sainted stand of the angelic lady, because of their difficulty in hearing; and not a word was to pass by them not understood, and so not easy of analysis, in order that they might compare verbal notes at home, and then determine the momentous question, whether they were to abscond from the last theological light that shone upon them, and join with this the female luminary, and not remain attached to the little coterie with whom they had worshipped; that is, with whom they had been for the preceding forty days!

The angel of the night rose up before the essembled eyes of the miscellaneous auditory, and having read an appropriate hymn, the same was measured through its short metre by voluntary voices; and then an apology was made by the speaker, amounting, as usual on such occasions, to the doubtful sweetness of egotistical sentiments; but still it was always practised, and the lady speaker concluded that it would operate as a caveat against overstrained expectation. Then came the text, which was carefully covered by the dog-ear in the good Book of our ancient visiters; and next there rolled out from the feminine declaimer about one thousand interrogatories, about that which would puzzle a cool collater of biblical riches; the interrogative being the arbitrary style of the speaker's questioning and questionable eloquence: subsequently most awful words flowed free, as the rapid tongue ejected a long declaratory talk of the millenium, and one hundred forty-four thousand families; which continued for half an hour in unmatchable rapidity.

Down went the female minister—it must have been for lack of matter; it could not have been for want of small talk—but as if to compensate for the silence of an angel, up rose that angel's husband—and such an husband for an angel!

His face was literally haired beyond all comparison—even when compared to the modern monkeys of the fashionable pave—in beard, in whisker, in mustache, in imperial, in hoggish look, in animal portraiture; in all he out-haired the booby and the brainless,

the donkey and the dandy—but still there he stood, a saint in hair, certainly, but still a speaking saint, and he spoke.

The very same strain, bating a little of the sharp questioning mode of his little lady, was heard; and over and over went the broad thunder of the noble lungs of the hairy male saint, endeavoring to enforce his own belief, real or feigned, that the great millenium was at hand, and the greatest Governor of all the great globes was about to manifest himself, and take under the wing that never closes the one hundred and forty-four thousand families; one of which was the speaker and his dutiful little duck who spake before him.

The lecturer rested himself, and took his seat along with the angelic duck of his own household; and the plate was then passed around, and an aggregate sum of forty cents deposited therein by the audience. That sum would very nearly pay one-half of the evening's expenses, and it was made up of pennies of every disagreeable shade, incidental to the dirty copper; but one single half-dime showed its silver countenance among the mob of its fellow-countrymen, and that half-dime was cast in by the old couple; for in doctrinal points they were perfect enthusiasts, and enthusiasm always robs the misled, to feed the idler on the monomaniac or missionary roads.

Again the blended voices of the audience arose in the lofty poetry of the solemn hymn, stilling the breathers around, and riveting all that had ears, into which the sounds of the sacred and ancient music is welcome as the voices of home, with tones of calming sweetness, and truer to the living harmony that makes its home in the gentle heart, than all the science of the olden world.

The old couple had been attentive, and silently garnering all the precious morceaus that escaped the saint of male or female gifts; and when snug in the two old arm-chairs of their little kitchen, each worshipper remained wordless during a whole hour, and not an audible comment was ventured by either.

The old lady was the first to break ground, and laying her hand upon the shrinking shoulder of her ancient mate, the following brilliant dialogue ensued:

"She contradicts my dream last night," said she.

"Oh, Lor', my Katy," responded the husband.

"I dosen't know vot to think on 't," said the Crone.

"I too, Katy," said the trembling crony.

"I'll have the merekel perfounded," whispered Katy.

"Sartin', my Ka.," whispered he; "an' how?"

"I know—I do," said she, very mysteriously.

"Besure—an' how?" whispered the crony, putting all his ears close to the lips of the old lady, as if he anticipated an enchantress through the chimney flue.

"I will, by the forton-tiller," said his wife.

"Lucky tought; you shill," said the reviving old gentleman, breathing for the first time in two minutes and a half.

And this was the particular business of the superstitious old lady with the celebrated Madam Tag; and a very important business it was too, as we can make it appear: the old pair, addicted so often and capriciously to change their holy lecturer, provided the dream mentioned by the visitor could be made to agree with the last sermon heard, would be steady worshippers with the angelic wife of the hairy husband, never missing, even on stormy nights, to be present; always saving, however, that if a newer reaper in the evangelical or pretentional school arrived, they would fly to him in quest of attracting novelty, and cling to the latter if his doctrine were broad enough to sustain the cumbrous load of their joint superstition.

The new lady-minister might gain two good and venerable members to her thin congregation, each ready to drink down a double dose of lugubrious doctrine, and which, in the first formation of the experimental society, was not to be deemed a trifle or two: and hence it may be asserted that it was proper for the old lady to hazard a five and-twenty cent piece, and not endure the heavy thought that the manifestation of her midnight dream run counter to the maiden lecture of a foreign angel.

The fourth lady in the little ante-room sat immediately beneath the tallow candle, which now had assumed the boldness of exhibiting two winding-sheets, amid a dead silence; for not even a breath ventured forth. This lady was short, very genteel, and had the appearance of being in mourning, primarily—we mean in entire black; for every article that hung upon her little frame was dark, and even the crescent arched brows over her coal-black eyes, were dun—cosmetically. Sitting under the doubtful light of a candle encumbered with fat sheets, appeared to throw her completely in the shade; and when black is shaded it may be observed that the painter's art has expired in darkness. The little lady so darkly encumbered externally, was still more darkly encumbered internally; and strange to say, though truth being scarce must be strange, her internal darkness was created by gas!

It was her misfortune to live in what was termed an arcade; being a house fronting the longitudinal boundary of the lot upon which it rests, and running the whole length of the same, with an area in front. The house was divided into rooms of twelve by eighteen feet, and so numerous as to contain about twenty-

four poor families, some of the latter consisting of two and some six persons; and it frequently occurs in the well-filled rooms, that the residing patriots have each, and enjoy in severalty, exactly six feet square within which to struggle for life, liberty, and the pursuit of bread and butter. It was the misfortune also of the little lady in black to have for an under-neighbor on the first floor, the most disagreeable woman in the whole row, who was more disagreeable than the air her name designated, which was Gas. The latter had complete control over Mr. Gas, her patient husband; and in fact if he in the slightest degree contradicted his amiable spouse, the nearest domestic article to her hard hand would arrive after a swift passage on his shoulders or head: and the conduct of this mild paragon of her soft sex, had the effect to drive her husband into the corner grocery, to burn his native segar, talk politics after the manner of those who echo the tale of the lying partizan and drink the manufactured rum intended to poison men, who wished to escape another and more sudden death.

Mrs. Gas never spoke ill of any single body, nor could it be said that she spoke ill of that or any other body; but she had one of the most singular modes—which may be esteemed, undoubtedly, original—of insinuating things good and evil, that ever was invented by a sanguine and bold woman to plague and harass her modest neighbors of the female gender. Mrs. Gas was one of the figures unfrequently met on this peaceful globe, whose talk outsped and outlingered aught that might be produced even from the academy of garrulity itself; for she was one of the few philosophers in robes who cling to the strange notion that every breath of life should bear witness, in comely phrase, of the benevolent image of the active mind.

She would stand near the cistern with her tub and wash-board, and soiled wardrobe of every color, shape, and fashion that ever met the curious eye, washing, wrenching, twisting, shaking, soaking, and rinsing, with a devotion truly exemplary; and at the same time give utterance to five-and-twenty battalions of hints, insinuations, acid verbalities and scorching impleaders, that did not appear to be aimed at any one in particular; and yet a dozen ladies sitting at their front windows, might construe any number of fiery hints as intended for their particular notice and edification.

The little lady in black being a very sensitive and nervous body, and living almost in solitude, and hence predisposed to catch and cherish in the memory, and digest industriously every word and sentence that reached her, had heard Mrs. Gas repeatedly, and unfortunately gave too much importance to the original vagaries of that eccentric sample of neighborly annoyance. If the visitor at Madam Tug's room had disinclined her attention when the long broken discourses commenced, the latter might have passed off with the harmonies of the naked children, who often cried in concert to accommodate the amateurs of sounds in the arcade; but listening eagerly to gather all that was uttered, unluckily the little lady in mourning heard and digested too much, and deemed the most spiteful and slanderous part of the gassy monologues intentionally spoken against herself.

The peculiarly disagreeable and azotic Mrs. Gas would be standing over her wash-tub, plunging her wrinkled and long red fingers into the crowded heap of woolens and cottons, of every figure that bandages the figures of life, and commence in a voice intended to be heard, although the manner and look of the operator would induce the belief in a spectator that Mrs. G. was lecturing—not figures of flesh and bone, but ciphers of woolen and cotton.

"Vell, I do wunder 'ow people dress in sich style"—ringing a large towel, spotted with lamp oil.

"I think I could tell at whose expenses"—ringing another. "If some people know'd vot I know, I guess some people wouldn't make sich a show"—handling a large sheet, and pressing out the gushing suds.

"Thank 'eavin, I don't flaunt my duds, as if I didn't live in a' arcad"—laying the rolled sheet on the rim of the tub.

"No, thank my Maker, I doesn't do that"—catching a small piece of Russian diaper spitefully.

"People can't be respicteble wot don't come in 'till midnight"—rubbing the aforesaid diaper.

"I wonder where married people stay 'till that time of night"—holding up the diaper and shaking her head.

"Vell, some man must come as far as the corner with the gay gallanters"—picking a pin from the diaper.

"Howsever, it's nuthin' to me, oh in course not; nor no hard-working female"—rubbing a child's cap.

"Vell, sich as this may be wantin', but that's none of my business, in course"—rinsing the cap.

"Them new dresses must be paid for, run a score for, or somebody has to stand the rackit"—soaping a petticoat of yellow flannel.

"And that's none of my business, in course, I don't say it is"—wrenching the little cap, which assumes the shape of a link of white sausage.

"I might tell where the crape shawl come from"—scouring a stocking into seven holes—

"But I don't; some people ought to thank me"—looking with open eyes and pressed lips.

"Vell, so it is—easy to live, and give out

washing; and who's to cash up for 't?"—smelling a towel.

"I s'pose he kin afford it"—smiling ironically.

"If he can't, there's the 'solvent laws," rolling the towel into the shape of a blue-black snake.

"Black dresses an't always the duds to hide all things"—pauses, and sweeps the bottom of the tub in search of small articles.—

"But it's none of my business, in course not; don't I say so? I'll warrant a new hat 'ill go in No. 12 next week; vell, it's none of my business, can't a body talk?"

These working soliloquies were spoken in a clear tone of voice, and were heard by all the front occupiers in the arcade, and were intended so to be, by all who would listen; and sometimes a soliloquy, when near its termination, and the end of the washing task also approached, would be much plainer, and its epithetic flow coarser, as if the terminal page of matter contained the spirit of the whole harangue condensed and embittered.

This annoyance arising from the light source of Mrs. Gas, had been a continual exciter of vexation to the little lady in black, who lived alone fabricating the chemise for either sex, and who had no friend into whose ears might be poured the little griefs which invariably cease to afflict heavily when divided in whispers with another. Forced, in the solitude of her situation, to pour over the unwelcome eloquence of her sharp neighbor, the small lady realized on each successive return to her mind of the objectionable verbalities, an increase of aggravation, and as a hazardous experiment she came to the wooden temple of Madam Tag, cherishing a hope that the oracle of untranspired events might throw in a consolatory hint that the removal of Mrs. Gas from the arcade was a matter most likely to happen; or that her removal from this world might be somewhat speedy, to the relief of the indwellers of the haunted house generally, and of the maker of chemisetts in particular.

The remaining person of the five individuals, found in the ante-room by the party of Madam La Pump, was a female servitor, apparently arrived at that invisible period of life whose reputation is the age of discretion! The girl, prim and plump—a combination, by the way, seldom exhibited in the figures of life—had a light in her restless eye that might have been mistaken for an overflow of foreshadowed knowledge; but it was only an evidence of a light, restless mind, that deemed a mystery a second sun in the firmament, until the disappearance of which no other orb could shine, and total darkness would endure. The most trifling occurrence connected with the probabilities of the future, was made a pretext for a visit to the seer of the coming things of life; and repeatedly had the girl's shadow mingled in the shades made by the mould candle in the room wherein it now remained. The object of her present visit may be detailed, to exhibit the slight inducements sometimes afforded the over-curious to make an endeavor to have some misunderstood passage of life explained; or to have some uncommon dream interpreted, examined, denounced as frivolous, or declared falsely prophetic, in the darkness of its shaded promises.

The girl, being a gourmand of the heaviest school, which is the well-known class of over-eaters, frequently was troubled with dreams of the most heavy and lugubrious details; and when the sudden and lazy night-mare did pay her a visit, it was in the most hideous shape, and one, too, that might frighten a veteran who stood before the fire of an enemy, and not merely before the fire of a cook-room. Only the night previous to her visit to Madam Tag, the girl had had the singular occurrence of dreaming that, without the long and delightful pleasure of courtship, with all its little and big, and walking and riding, and soft and serious incidents, so well known to the wiser than ourselves, whose experience is very limited in that regard—without any of the positive or negative bliss of elevating courtship—she, the serving girl, had absolutely been married hastily, with no time to talk of the event, or make a boast of the marital conjunction; and married, too—and here was the enormous objection—wedded to a sailor of seven feet nine inches in height—a sea-monster in length, a sea-monster in breadth, and weight, and power, and standing; yea, and more, a land-monster, whose mop and whiskers were declared by his own barber to weigh twenty-eight pounds, one quarter and one eighth, avoirdupois.—There was a dream for a cook at the kitchen-fire, and that cook a female in the warmest period of existence—we mean the invisible age of discretion! and that cook, too, standing in her pasteboard slippers, and only measuring one yard and one third, according to the standard stick bearing to a pendulum vibrating seconds in vacuo, the relation of 1,000,000 to 1,086,141, at a temperature of 32° Fahrenheit.

"Only to think," muttered the bright-eyed cook, "four feet female amalgamated to seven feet nine inches male; married to a giant whose very teeth must be tusks, whose very hands must be vices; what can it mean? I'll be off to Madam Tag's; the thing is horrible."

And there she sat, prim, and plump, and eager for her turn; nor reflecting at all that whatever fell from Madam Tag must necessarily be hypothetical.

This, however, hundreds who visited the

celebrated lady did not believe; many had gone away with a very exalted opinion of the palmistress' talents; and very many had been shown things, and had heard relations, that magnified wonder and transcended belief.

We live in an enlightened age, say the newspaper philanthropists; and this is well, and so it should be as well as be said; but, alas! is it so? and how many of the round numbers in Balbi's Tables of the population of the "age" are enlightened?

The five ladies, of whom particular mention has been made, having been disposed of by the patient Madam of information, the servant whispered to Madam La Pump, "your turn, marm," and left the room.

"You first go," said Madam La Pump to Angelica.

"No, no; you go first, said the latter, almost frightened.

"Oh, Angel! me in tremair," muttered the former.

"I won't go till you've bin," said Angelica, hastily.

"Vell, me will," observed Madam La Pump, who accordingly walked into the grand parlor, with her lap-dog under her shawl; and having saluted the priestess, took a seat.

Madam Tag whispered to her visitor that it was necessary to put aside the small pug, as she never allowed any one to retain aught that might have a tendency to lead the mind of her auditor from the topic of conversation; and having said thus much with a serious countenance, the advisory Madam spoke to one of the black parrots in a cage above.

"Ah, pole-ly, pole-ly, bon ami!"

"Mar, mar, mar," responded the dark birds.

"Taisez vous, jolly pole-ly, bon ami," muttered Madam.

"Nor, nor, mar, mar," screamed the suspended Pellys.

At this moment Madam Tag cast a serious look at the sitter, and taking her tea-cup slightly sprinkled with tea-leaves, opened and looked into the cup, and with a face of unsurpassed solemnity, uttered, very slowly—

"Yais—you have—a lover."

This announcement to Madam La Pump created a surprise in her altogether inexpressible; she involuntarily shook her head and looked incredulous. Madam Tag laid her long bony fingers on the arm of the sitter, and signified to the latter, "be silent," and then continued,

"Ah! you 'ave—and—mayn't know it—'tis so often."

This confirmatory declaration of Madam Tag was worth her whole art of divination; it set the thoughts of Madam La Pump receding through nights and days, and eves and hours, in search of a form, a body and soul, a man in form and dress, a lover. Who had ever spoken to her, in her solitary life of ceaseless toil, her path of quiet industry? had one word reached her that might, even by violent construction, be taken as the shade of a shadow that would introduce the substance of a lover? what was it that quickened the beat of her small pulse? she had been married, had lost the twin of her social path, and framed for a livelihood the colored wreathes of elegant flowers, which adorned the bonnets of the young and gay, and the warm and wild-hearted girl in her smiling road of hope; but never while she intertwined the mimic leaf, and berry, and stem, and tendril, did she indulge the dream of another bridal flower for the lines and curves of her own dark hair. What made her tremble, and made the color mount and swell in the veins of her brow? was it hope? no—hope had gone off almost too coldly to the oblivion of an early grave. Was it the declaration of Madam Tag? she merely touched the wire that spread electricity through the frame of the little French lady. What was it that created the sensation? Go, ask the modest heart of the pure woman its lonely and untold history, and therein you may find an answer.

Madam Tag continued to gaze on her sitter with a serious countenance, scarcely moving her head or eye; and she appeared to mutter neither French nor English, but a jargon of monosyllabic utterances. Presently her hand raised a pack of marked cards, by the backs of which the faces could be known instantly, and split the whole pack several times, until her long forefinger fell upon a small pile. Casting her large white eyes, full of meaning, upon Madam La Pump's face, the fortune-teller pronounced a number of unintelligible words, fell back in her large arm chair, and then exclaimed, 'tis so—a single heart! At the next moment she exhibited to the astonished eyes of Madam La Pump the ace of hearts.

"If 'twas the deuce, you'd be engaged," slowly spoke the learned lady, and with a countenance in which not a solitary mark of levity could be detected.

Madam La Pump was silent, and seemed bound by a death-like spell; while her thoughts were rapid and confused in their multiplicity. There was a heart—whose heart? of a beau? no! stay—she can tell—or give a cue to the fact; she has power; she can do it—can she?

The fortune and sign-discovering Madam never changed a line in her face, almost cadaverous and very severe; mindful of the least shade in the face of her customer, she seemed to exercise a power that bound the patient recipient of her lore in a spell of blind wonderment.

"Now," said Madam Tag, taking the cup with tea-leaves, and slightly shaking the same,

"I will show initials of his names." Then she gazed at the bottom of the cup, and subsequently traced with a long needle, lines that a warm wisher for such a result might acknowledge formed the letters J. B. The moment it was made to appear that the letters resembled the preceding initials, the little French lady was on the even of indulging a long and most boisterous laughter. There were the initials of a man, and one too who had been and was known to her; of a man who had been to her house, that is to say, to her room, a home of one hundred and forty-four square feet, excluding a closet; and he had been there for hours; but he a beau?—mon Dieu! thought the little widow, who but a fortune-teller could make him one?

Madam Tag having thus surprised her customer, asked a number of questions, and told her sundry things in a very peculiar style; and all thus told, by an easy comparison of the answers previously received, could be readily divined without much difficulty. Madam La Pump took her small dog and withdrew, to give place to Miss Angelica, who immediately entered and filled the chair recently vacated.

It must be acknowledged that Miss Angelica, although of an age that few would term juvenile—ourselves not among the few—was rather timid than otherwise, and felt some trepidation in the lonely presence of a woman of such high repute, in the dark letters of the hidden science. The former sat still and mute for some time, and looked at the Gallic revealer of the future as if the communications of the latter would be received without an iota of disbelief.

"Pole-ly—Pole-ly! que demandez vous?" uttered Madam Tag, looking up at the dark parrots with an eye fixed and riveted.

"Gracious me!" thought Angelica, "does she git it out of the black parrots? wot a witch incarnate!"

"You have no father," observed Madam, calmly, nor brother, but there be men of your name."

"There," said the same lady, after a long pause, and picking up a pack of cards," there is more in that bundle of fifty-two papers, than men could see in the stars after a study of fifty years; let me convince you, you never had a lover."

Angelica was about agreeing to the gloomy fact, when the great female magician shook her finger and muttered, "never answer me."

"You are young, yet," continued Madam Tag; "let me show you one who sooner or later must make himself known."

"*She* says I'm young," thought Angelica; "she, a powerful woman in the knowledge of her art, she ought to know, and I in a dishabille—what can she mean? who?"

There was a stir in the small heart of Angelica, not all created by surprise, not all swelled by hope. Whence came the pleasing, unusual sensation?

It was strange, and it was an unknown stranger, that same little warmth of the benevolent heart. She did not remember a day when that slight rush of blood had been felt so sensibly, and then her thoughts wandered to what? to whom? one that would make himself known? the imagination of woman lives in her latest breath; there came a form, the great unknown: what dreamer has not been seated on the highest throne of ideality? a great undiscovered, who would be exposed, when? was it with him that she was to promenade on a Sunday eve through the aristocratic and roofless shop of Bob Conteit, in search of a cold cup of curious cream? Was the unknown's arm to support her through the green walks, and flowery paths, and gravel avenues of Vauxhall? where roses bloom in the sun, and wither amid the puffs of smoke, from the segars of juvenile blockheads; and where evening bells are never heard, and other belles are loud and loose; and brass bands slaughter a solo combinedly, while the fishmonger does it individually and with a tin trumpet.

Was the great unknown predestined to lead her through the crowded walks, and circle the Battery in an elegant promenade? and lean upon the Battery rail and see the small vessel, stirless and silent in the murmuring tide, with a solitary lantern hung aloft to let the midnight floater know that the anchor was sound in its evening doze? To gaze from the gunless battlements of Castle Garden, far out ont he star-lit softness of the beautiful bay, where the face of the idle waters was calm and glassy, and where moonbeams shone and blended, and rested on the fair sheet? while in the cool bosom of the waters, the porgy was quiet with his red gills, the streaked bass was contented with his bed of rushes, and the large eel was seeking his coverlet of mud: where the crab reposed in the silence of his red shell, and the burglarious lobster was mild in the arms of magnetising Morpheus.

Was the great unknown to show her the humbugs and mercenary mountebanks that cater for a museum? was he to show her the blazing serpents that spat fire in the grand and continuous whirl of the pyrotechnic wheels? where the bold and flaming rocket hisses on the spark-lit earth, and rushes with a moaning breath, and tortuous effort, and rapid whirl, up into the dark regions of the blue concave of night; there, like the fierce hopes of the visionary speculator, to part in a thousand spots of living light, and fall to the heavy earth to die in utter darkness?

Many images crowded into the little head of Miss Angelica, and wise the man would have been who could tell the number, and

when they would cease intruding; but the cry of the black parrot, and the answer of its owner, aroused Miss Angelica to a sense of being in the presence of Madam Tag.

The fortune-teller shuffled the cards, divided and then laid them all on the table. "Now," said she, "if the first I turn up is a male of any suit, my prediction will prove true." She accordingly, after intended hesitation, selected one and showed it to Miss Angelica; it was the King of Diamonds. "There," said Madam Tag, with a face firm and smileless as a marble one, "if it had been the King of Hearts, you would know who was indicated; but this diamond represents one not yet admitted to social courtesy,"

In such way did the solemn Madam Tag suit her stories to the cards turned. If the King of Hearts had appeared, the royal fellow would have officiated in the supposed office of his neighbor of the Diamond mark. Taking up the cup and renewing the leaves from a mammoth tea-pot of ancient appearance, she shook for some time the small pieces that crowded the bottom. When she deemed them in a right position to represent a pictorial illusion, she showed to the astonished Angelica that which might be termed the semblance of a head in unfinished state; and which Madam Tag pronounced the imperfect representation of the particular unknown lover. "He will have," said Madam, "dark hair and eyes, and now he is not in the city; you will see him in the passage of the coming winter."

"I should like to see the initials of the name," said Angelica, in a whisper; and, indeed, all the divinations were given in a low tone of voice; and the sitter was seldom allowed to communicate except in the same manner: it seemed to sustain the mysterious appearance of all the matters and things that made up the local reputation of the domestic temple of the silently solemn and cool Madam.

"My initial cup was broken as you entered, and its like cannot be prepared before to-morrow," observed Madam Tag; "otherwise I would satisfy you without a doubt."

The cards were again resorted to, and their owner told Miss Angelica her age, omitting the fractional parts; when her mother died, and told her also that she would hear good news from a long distance; about what period a small gold ring on the finger of the sitter first encircled it; and that to dream of a ring was a sign corresponding to the circular lights of heaven, and hence the sacredness of the wedding ring; and the love man and woman exhibited for a ring of silver or gold even when weddings were not thought of. Much more was very calmly poured into the bending ears of Angelica, not of intrinsic worth, but merely the value that the manner of communication confers upon trifles in the audience chamber of a professor of unrevealed characters and incidents in the unwritten comedy of the future.

Madam addressed her parrots in the tones of uncommon sound—"Pole-ly—Pole-ly—ami," which brought the response, "mar—mar."

Miss Angelica rose to leave the describer of things expectant, who, being in a good humor, detained the customer some time, relating the story of her excessive watchings of the midnight stars, and all the family of burning satellites, in order to qualify herself for the momentous duty cast upon her by misfortune, of endeavoring to thread the untrodden paths shut out from the eyes of common mortals. After exacting a promise from Angelica to call on some future evening when the initial cup would be prepared, by secret spells, to perform its oracular functions, letter by letter, the sitter departed, and found Madam La Pump in the ante-room, and in close conference with Miss Hetty Crimp. It was all whispered, however, and in the very lowest key of female correspondence; as a lady over six feet in height, and shrouded in a double investment of most profuse and antique fashion, had entered the room as silent as a shadow; and she had the appearance of an overgrown Amazonian giantess in search of the dark profound and profoundly terrible.

Miss Hetty, who had been waiting with patience, and who had whispered inquiringly Madam La Pump a score of times what the great Madam would probably make known to her was at last, when Miss Algelica entered, saluted with "your turn, marm."

She moved into the parlor slowly, and in that state of mind when expectation is so powerful as to start the deep stream in the busy heart, and shake the nerves of the young and inexperienced, she took her seat, and wondered why her ears almost burned, and her blooming cheeks felt so overloaded with the fresh currents of the veins of life.

What a contrast the faces of the beautiful little maiden and the death-like appearing Madame afforded! the rose in the beauty and warmth of fresh life, and the marble features of cadaverous and wrinkled age. What a terrible transformer Nature is! not sparing even woman, the holiest light amid the darkness of time; not even sparing the prophetess in her own castle of profiting wisdom.

"Jole-ly—Jole-ly—ami," uttered Madam Tag, gazing on vacancy.

"Mar—mar—cup—cup," responded the dark birds.

"Sartan—water, pole-ley? oui, bon ami."

"Bless me," thought Hetty, "can them black things be spirits? what a woman! how awfully white she looks, and she can talk to the birds in some dead language—the tongue of a Bible witch."

A few questions from Madam Tag were

put to the young girl, and answered, and then the whole ground was open for the manœuvring of the forces of the former; when the age and some family circumstances were ascertained, she knew the weak spots in the young and credulous; and that knowledge was the key with which she wound up the time-piece that was to sound the hours of distant events: it was the shadow seized upon by the cunning to dissect, and foreboded the length and breadth, and shape and fabric, of the visionary substance.

Miss Hetty had wished, did wish, that the great Madam would display her wonderful powers in relation to that all-absorbing topic, the comedy of love with dramatic incidents; and their scenes and figures, and light-tinged clouds, and paths of enchantment, when the steps of life are pressed upon holy ground, with its rivulets of rose-fringed banks, and its golden showers, and whispers from the benevolent lips of the angelic fates, that come on unseen wings with the brief blessings, too much like the pure joy of innocence to last for ever.

In this wish the sweet girl, with her perennial laugh of life as it comes from its Maker, untouched by the checking clouds that gather around it in after time, was not disappointed; for Madam Tag, with her face of deep and solemn interlineations, remarked in an under tone:

"You're not married—nor have you seen him!"

"Miss Crimp trembled; there was a beginning, and that beginning operated upon a little bump, a bump possessed by every lady in the land—we mean Mr. Fowler's bump of keen curiosity.

The mysterious manners of Madam Tag, her cold action, her language and her looks, all aided in increasing the tremor of the little Miss. It was a tremor of delight. Curiosity has always its object in the dim future, and that makes it interesting; for anticipation is a certain robber of a coming thing, and strips the latter of one-half of its splendid self. What was coming next? perhaps the very evening when the little 'demoiselle would be introduced—to whom? ah! there was a flower-seed for the fond garden of innocent and brilliant thoughts; there was a magazine for a whole army of splendid dreams, with its drums and flutes, its shining arms, and banners streaming in the blow of the unseen winds.

"But you will," continued Madam Tag, "you are not to live single." With these words she took the hands of the trembling girl, and gazed upon a countenance of heightened beauty; and falling back in her large chair, seemed absorbed in admiration of the sitter, as if she deemed the latter a fairy whom romance could never match with its dangerous pencil.

"Mark that card," uttered Madam Tag, after a pause, "you have no father. If the card represent a male, it will tell more than Venus rising out of her gray bed at the set of sun."

The card was raised by the fortune-teller, muttering a few words: it was the King of Clubs.

"Black," thought Hetty—"good gracious!"

"He is now in mourning," uttered Madam, as if she had read the passing thought in the mind of the patient girl.

These words were spoken with a deliberation calculated to impress the hearer; a smile illumed the features of the latter; she knew it not—but it was a tribute to the skill of the oracle.

"There," said Madam, raising another card, "there is a conjunction of favorable signs, the Knave of Clubs; he will not be a widower, but young, industrious and respectable; your walk in life could not select a better supporter.

A blush overspread the whole features of the blooming girl, and there was a soft smile lighting the countenance of the living image; and she looked so charming with the simple gifts of nature, that if the promised being had seen her, and seen how an unearthly light will sometimes illumine the eye that hath known no sin, he would have bent beneath the idol in her homely robes, and surrendered his heart, and its life and riches.

"Now," said Madam Tag, taking the cup with spread tea-leaves, "I will show you the head of him to whom your attention must sooner or later be given; my signs demonstrate an early period."

The curiosity of Miss Hetty now grew to the loftiest elevation, and there was a wonderment in her wandering thoughts. Was it possible that wrinkled woman could show an outline of one who might not be in the circle of her acquaintance for years? what power that woman must have! was her mother a gipsy, and her father a star-gazer through the family of tubes? she must be above common witches, and all the almanac makers: could she be a descendant from the old ones named in the old books read by her mother on stormy nights, when the hail came down to break the old shingles on the roof? when the snow got in the window leaves and rolled about, though nobody touched them? when the wind upon which old hags were known to canter over chimney-tops, sung a song in the large chimney, that sounded like the low harmony of the dead march? when the broomstick seemed to stand upright and make no shadow by the lamp, and little crickets chirped only in under notes of fearful mourning, and the kitten ceased playing, and curled herself and her delicate little tail in the form of

an old horse-shoe, that laid for fifty years to frighten evil forms and old women who had sold their souls to the—first pawn-broker that ever opened shop? Good gracious me!—thought Miss Hetty, starting from her reverie at the sound of Madam Tag's unmothery voice.

"There," said Madam, "look at that attentively."

In the bottom of the cup the dark eyes of Miss Hetty Crimp were riveted in search, and long did she look and continue to look without discovering any thing but tea-leaves; it wanted the foretelling genius of Madam Tag to make things visible, even to the piercing gaze of a superstitious curious girl. With the aid of a needle—a professional one—the far-seeing Madam pointed to the outlines of a face, touching certain features to ensure a resemblance, then exhibited the hair and its contour; then traced the eyes, and nose, and chin; and Miss Hetty did make out the unfinished form of a head: there it was, a Hyson-skin miniature, not very plain, drawn in green leaves, not very perfect; but then that might arise from the low price of the coloring matter—it might be only eighteen-penny Souchong!

And this old woman saw it plainly in the first place, or did she knit it into existence with that needle? good gracious! well, I declare, it takes a witch to make a face out of leaves; especially as she did not say it was a cabbage-head, uttered the little Miss, in the simple wonderment of her astonished mind.

"Now, I can tell you," said Madam Tag, "what you don't think of; yes," continued the lady, turning up the Knave of Diamonds; "you will be the cause of some jealousy, though not much; the most beautiful that sit before me do so."

This delicate compliment, the utterance of which showed a little of the tact of the fortune-teller, was paid to every visiter whose hopes might be supposed to lead to the hymeneal temple; but to none could she utter it more deservingly than the little Miss before her.

"Now," observed Madam, "if that card is a certain one of the pack, your difficulty will terminate happily. It is so—look; the Deuce of Hearts, showing a unity. If it had been a spade, you would have lost the object in the most happy period of your existence."

Miss Hetty was overjoyed to find that she was not to be the cause of a duel, nor an estrangement of friendship in regard to any of her acquaintance, whom she might perhaps offend, only, as she thought, "because she couldn't help it."

Madam Tag then informed her that the initial cup of her sanctuary had been broken, but following certain lines and curves in the cup wherein the face had appeared, she might foretel, though not positively, that one of the initials, which should never be forgotten by Hetty, was the letter B. Then Madam Tag whispered to Hetty to be careful and observe some secret things, in regard to which our history must remain ignorant, for the simple reason that they were secrets as valuable as imperial ones; and by all means to send all her young acquaintance, or other persons, who had sustained a loss by larceny, as she, the fortune-teller, had paid particular attention to that portion of her profession, which was known to aid the loser in recovering even the tear in the eye of a lost Pleiad!

Hetty promised to do as requested, and saluting the great lady, who returned the salute with the same inanimate and smileless face she always wore, the former stept with a gay and cheerful mind and laughing face into the little ante-room. There she buried her smiling countenance into the bosom of Madam La Pump, and her hand in the shawl of the latter; but unfortunately in this last act she pressed hard upon the little pug, who not having been complimented nor surprised by Madam Tag, and having been asleep during the entire performances, deemed it his time to be heard in the house of the dark arts, and he yelled tremendously, considering his age and non-alliance in the troupe of Italian performers.

Madam La Pump, the kind little mistress of the pug, jumped up to see where the wound could be, and gave her dog two kisses with great rapidity; Miss Hetty followed with three, and Miss Angelica run to the mould candle, and catching at the winding-sheets which had curled in long circles, stood ready to grease the dog's limbs, and thus quiet his mistress.

The injury, however, was trifling, and deemed cured, after the last exclamation of the one hundred and one, uttered by Madam La Pump, had parted from that lady's lips.

The ladies took their leave of the small mansion of the Gallic lady of star-lit and card and tea-leaf information, and passed out of the little alley on their road home, where we must leave them for a few minutes, to enable us to glance at the Amazonian lady, who glided noiselessly into the inner apartment of the fortune-teller, in search, as we have before said, of something darkly secret, which large women are supposed to dream of, after reading modern tales and romances, with murders, and duels, and piracies, composed by the chiffonniers in this age of morals and money-making.

The large lady who entered to see Madam Tag, was the wife of a sailor in the service of the government's ship, absent in the straits of Gibralter; he was a boatswain, a seaman in the absolute sense of that word, with every trait, good or ill, of the crazy mariner. The

Amazonian lady loved him with the single love of a devoted heart and the slavery of a high-wrought passion. He went upon the waves as jolly as if he were just leaving them after a cruise of five years, and left his wife without one suspicion on her part that her good-looking manly boson was other, in that peculiar kind of morals termed chastity, than a monk of the olden time, before vice had crept into the cloister, and taken its seat on the temples of the ascetic. A letter, however, from an unknown hand, the details of which bore evident marks of verisimilitude, aroused her suspicion, that her boson was a boson in full: and one of the many water-travelers who are said to appreciate in every port the smiling faces of their inhabitants. It was mere suspicion, that hung to her every thought, and mixed with every moment of the day, but not conviction. Her devotedness to the mere man precluded the possibility of absolute belief in his dereliction, and hope often created a smile at her having indulged for a moment in a belief of his unloyalty. The mind wavers even in its fondness for life, and the tall lady, perplexed periodically with the bitter reflections upon her absent sailor, and having no friend of whom she could make a confidant, had determined to take the hints of Madam Tag on the subject.

The latter admitted the Amazonian, and the two, seated *vis-a-vis*, formed the most remarkable portraits that ever adorned the small parlor. The fortune-teller at first was doubtful of the real motive of her visitor, but after a strict examination, noting the hesitancy of the lady to answer some questions, her ready mode of responding to others, and watching the entire face of her visitor, and every minute change that crossed the countenance, was, after a length of time, enabled to divine the real motive of her visit, which seemed to be a wish to be convinced of the truth or falsity of her absent husband. Knowing, as Madam Tag did, that such a woman, so devoted to the supposed unloyal, and so afflicted as was made apparent, could not be convinced either one way or the other, the fortune-teller came to the bold conclusion to make her a mourner for that which it is the lot of all to weep over. Having gleaned from the visitor every circumstance that could be developed, and which had passed during the marital lives of the parties, and after having, by a guarded mode, elicited more than the visitor seemed at first inclined to discover, with the cards in one hand, the cup in the other, and a celestial globe before her, and with a face as coldly seeming as the slab of marble that covers the buried, Madam Tag uttered the astonishing announcement: "your husband, mam, is dead." The senses of the visitor were suspended; she fell back, struck with the announcement, and remained in a swoon. Real grief now annoyed her, not the fangs of suspicion, but the pain of a bereaved affection.

Her jealousy died, and memory gave it up as a trifling thing that returns not in reminiscence; and her falling spirit, when the keenness of recent loss passed off, revived in not half of the living misery that had tortured her with the hourly thought of her husband's dishonor. He came home, and her joy was greater than her grief had been poignant; but she never after became jealous; not a thought of that kind ventured to mix its canker with the passage of life. Often did she think of the fortune-teller—and that the remedy of Madam Tag for jealousy was at least as hazardous as the affliction had been painful.

Having accompanied Madam La Pump and her friendly party to the household of Madam Tag, we feel bound to return with them; in order to which, we now rejoin the three who walked with rapidity towards the home of Madam La Pump, where all were to lodge, and before sleep visited the eyes of either, compare all their accounts of the doings and sayings of the great lady.

The chattering party had approached within two squares of the house, when they were suddenly interrupted by a large sailor, apparently in a state of partial intoxication, who, throwing his rough arms around the shrieking figures, uttered a hurried salutation to his "dear doxies," and swore with energy he would have a kiss of the whole "bunch." The ladies screamed, as is usual on such occasions, Hetty the shrillest of either—and the shawl of Angelica fell to the ground, and on it the tumbling form of the little pug. The tall sailor, deeming himself in the highest of unmolested sport, clung to Angelica and Madam, who still cried for help; while Miss Hetty, who had disengaged herself from the man's clutches, commenced shedding tears on the dog, which she had picked up. The sailor, in his struggles to retain the two ladies, was near stumbling, but he regained his footing, and still held his prizes by the arms, and would have proceeded to further rudeness, but at that moment a blow from an unknown hand freed his burden from his hands, and hurled him into the street, where he rolled over like a log.

The ladies saw that it was Mr. Crisp who had passed in season to free them, not from danger, but the vulgar usage of an intemperate beast. Sam told the party to continue their journey towards home, and leave him to balance affairs with the fellow in the street. The watchman at this period arrived, and the prostrated man having arisen, charged Mr. Crisp with the assault, because no other person stood near enough to be the aggressor, and insisted that the officer of the night should lodge the former in the house not provided for lodgement.

Sam endeavored to enlighten the watchman on the subject, but as this class of guardians are among the lowest ranks of brutes, in possession of brief authority, it was in vain to expostulate. The sailor observed that he did not mind a tap or two, and could change coin of that kind with any shipmate; but the blow given to him seemed to have come from the fist of the very devil, and the speaker was determined to have satisfaction, right or wrong. The watchman stated that he didn't believe either, nor did he intend to "hear any more of it;" and having delivered this lucid opinion, which did equal honor to the head of the magistrate and the heart of the animal, the party walked down to what is termed the watch-house.

The party, consisting of the watchman, who had been a notorious gambler in the lower hells of the metropolis, Mr. Crisp and the tall sailor, who were decent men compared with their escort, arrived at what is named a watch-house, which, in appearance is something like a stable where animals are kept, except that instead of stalls the lodge corners are called "bunks," where the undercurrent of night authority sleeps. There is a sort of corn-crib, surrounded by pointed pine pickets, with an animal enclosed named Captain or Deputy, generally a classic scholar, whose improvement upon English orthography is a matter that should obtain a premium from the appointing power. Mr. Crisp and the tall sailor appeared before this modern man of splendid gifts called Captain, who had a long beard, dirty shirt, and the appearance of a blackguard. He took down on a slate the complaint of the tall sailor, the cross-complaint of Mr. Crisp, and the relation of the watchman, and then the captain observed that he believed they, the prisoners, were both highbinders and disturbers of the peace. Having volunteered this lie to the discredit of Sam, who gave one look to the face of the man, the captain lit his segar, observing that the prisoners must be locked up for the night.

Sam had clenched his iron fist; had pressed his teeth like the solid force of the lock-jaw; his eyes glared with anger; man—his feelings, his notions of right and wrong, all his judgment and discretion had sunk, and there reigned all paramount in him the force, the power, the energy of the mere brute!

How well was it the object who had libelled such a man did not venture where one blow had finished life!

When the authority of a Christian city places in power an ignorant man, the diseased spots of his heart become as apparent as the luminary that lights the scenery of life; how strange is it, that men who, in one convention, will discard the scarcely contaminated from the precincts of a society, will, in another, cherish the partizan, diseased with a moral leprosy that disgraces the grave of the felon, and the name that is covered by its sands!

Mr. Crisp sunk into sleep in his cell of bars, and regained his composure, and not a dream disturbed his rest, quiet and calm as an infant's.

CHAPTER XVII.

Grand Italian operatic and domestic airs.

In the garnished parlor of his lofty residence in Mahogany Place sat Mr. Louis Seiser, his amiable and fashionable wife and three daughters, who outvied their undomestic mother in all the extravagance of the ton. They were all in earnest conversation in regard to the sublime opera, that being the highest limit which a false taste—or the absence of all taste—could carry the empty heads and trifling hearts of those who repair to a scene where the foreign tongues, not understood, are for that very reason a mass of sounds without sense. To hear an oration in a foreign tongue, and praise its beauty because the voices that uttered it were stated to be good, is a mode of appreciating merit of very recent discovery, and confined, as we supposed, to the blockheads who attend a collegiate commencement. Mr. Louis Seiser and family were surrounded by all that massive and brilliant furniture which is known by its imitation to the royal style of a Louis of French name, and by its gorgeous richness and utter inutility. The heavy continental carpet, with its costly cover of fine texture and courtly figures; the gilded chairs, with satin shrouds made to cover the velvet bottoms; the glass, whose height overtopped the giant in his measurement; and the chandelier, pendant from a bed of white flowers, that acknowledged the plastic hand of a scientific decorator; together with the satin drapery that threw its scarlet flowers in the room, fringed with a trail of lace like the face of frosted snow, bespoke a taste as unexceptionable in fashionable society, as did the vast cost denote a purse whose contents were unknown and unchallenged, except by those whose little store of life had been robbed to make it swell.

Company was expected, all of that unimpeachable class known as the highest circles and first respectability; and which is composed generally of a descendant of a butcher, a baker, a spermaceti candle-maker, a pettifogger, or money-changer, or a grocer—the heirs of whom generally lose sight of the ancestor's trade the moment gold has accumulated to that extent which redeems the family coat-of-arms from the presence of a cleaver,

dough-trough, candle-mould, a pen, or discount-list. It has even been said that the ancestor of some of the highest respectability was a laundress of the Dutch school, although we never detected a wash-tub in the coat-of-arms of a member of republican aristocracy: but it belongs to us to say, that one of the ancient Seisers was actually a mangler, with a small sign lettered with lamp-black, and that thereupon were to be seen letters that seemed to be unwashed and very crooked, and were in import and numbers as follows, viz:

"WAUSHENG DUN'D HEAR."

"Certainly, pa," said Miss Emily, the eldest daughter, who would delight in an opera beau, "you must subscribe to the opera. I declare, ma, how can pa, hesitate?"

"I don't know, indeed, my dear," returned Mrs. Seiser; "it is not with my concurrence."

"Surely not, ma," said Victoria, the second daughter; "I wonder what *is* three thousand dollars against an entire season."

"A great deal of money, Vic., my dear," said the father.

"Well. I've been so seldom," observed Julia, the youngest daughter, "that it seems as if I'm to be deprived altogether of music."

"No, my dear, your pa will not be quite so cruel," answered the indulgent mother.

"Ah, my wife," observed Mr. Seiser, with a sigh, "you certainly have great power for a weak vessel."

"Lor', ma," said the eldest daughter," "when you were young, no doubt that you were a nightly attendant at the opera."

A slight color, somewhat like a hectic touch, passed to the countenance of the mother, who had been a semstress in one of the eastern towns early in life: none of the family knew it: none could deem it a truth, had they been told so; and even Mrs. Seiser felt ashamed when the remark of her daughter brought it to her mind. Yes, it was shame, and this was occasioned by the blow her pride received, when reminded of the scanty path of her girlhood, when industry was hers, and a contentment that might claim the name of philosophy. Now she was the wife of a banker; riches were hers, and the tinsel that adorned all her daughters, increased and multiplied at the mere suggestion of whim, was profuse, and costly, and wasteful; but let that pass—it was the toys of the reigning fashion, and there was the grand attainment of life's finest hopes.

Had there been one in the whole circle of friends or visiters to the family of Mrs. Seiser, who knew and had the plainness to hint to the indulgent mother, that she had been a very poor girl whose fingers were active in necessary toil, the sun of that lady would have set, her face would have been shielded to hide a blush, and why? is it because luxury befools the indulger? distorts the virtues of mankind? creates a false estimate of the objects of life, and the happy modes that can alone enable its possessor to enjoy without repletion, and terminate it without disgrace? Even so.

"I do wonder where the company stay," said Emily; "but, ma, if we do subscribe, I cannot think of wearing the dresses we have; and, indeed, the girls will all want outfits appropriate to the occasion."

"Undoubtedly, my dear," responded Mrs. Seiser; "the time has not arrived when we are to be limited in such demands."

"Well, my love," said her husband, "I suppose we must indulge the girls; so when the company arrives, we will merely have to assent to their propositions, and subscribe our share; although it is a heavy item of expense, and what is worse, a continual drainer, as we know by experience."

"Oh, my dear, how you dream!" said Mrs. Seiser, smiling at the thought of sparing expense for a thing so divine as the noisy performance of an opera.

"Pa, you really put me out," said Victoria; "what would be thought of our family, looked up to to take the lead in the most fashionable movement of all our friends?"

"You do astonish me, pa," said Julia, counting the thirty-two nights of performance, and anticipating the pleasure of being gazed upon every night—by whom? that was a question, and the solution of which would comprise all the pleasure the poor girl could receive by attending the opera.

"It does seem," said the eldest daughter, with a tear in her eye, and wishing to appear a small sacrifice to parental cruelty, "that pa is determined that I shall never get married, and never indulge in the ordinary routine of pleasure before quitting home with one who will have to indulge me."

"Be calm, my dear," said the amiable mother; "your father can mean no such thing while I live."

"Well, I thought pa was joking," said Miss Julia, laughing.

"Now, were you jesting, pa?" asked the eldest daughter.

"No, my child, I was not; it requires a large sum of money to sustain so heavy a share of the expenses," said the father.

"But, my dear," said Mrs. Seiser, "we have the privilege of dictating even the character of the performances; and then the advantage of the music to the girls."

"I would agree to that, if they understood the language, and could comprehend what is heard on the stage," said Mr. Seiser.

"That certainly makes no difference," observed the eldest daughter, at least not to a

large majority who attend; I declare, I don't think one quarter of the whole audience understands the language of the performer."

"By no means," said Mrs. Seiser; "why Col. Bones and Mrs. Changeful both informed me that it was wholly unnecessary to study a language in order to admire the music of its songs; and, besides," continued Mrs. Seiser, disclosing a secret of fashionable society, "there is great pleasure in going to see and being seen—all the world's a stage—and the stage is there; and wherever the audience is, there a body can be appreciated."

"Yes," thought Mr. Seiser, "and at a very large expense; and there is a question in my mind, where there are no mental attractions, what is appreciated? the jewelry, the robes and the cluster of deep laces on the innocent butterflies, that wave the silken wings and show the golden threads?"

"There is the bell, now for the visiters," said Mrs. Seiser, rising to do honor to the select portion of great patrons—for it is a trait in this world of variety that hospitality among the rich and bountifully laden, consists in surfeiting those who want no single item of the mass that is rendered; but never affording a single crumb to the deserted poor!

The visiters were nearly a dozen families, and others who had, or pretended to have, a pure unimpeachable taste for any music not sung in the English language. It had become the fashion to patronize a foreign set of musicians, and it did not seem to make the slightest difference whether the artists were understood or not in the language they muttered, and sometimes growled. The old fashioned English airs, that satisfied better ears for music, and far higher minds in the cultivated fields of literature, were discountenanced, by all the pure republican aristocracy, as something too antiquated for modern society, and the conventional intellects that make up the splendor of its nothingness: something new was ardently expected by the talentless circle of domestic Dukes and free Dutchesses, the republican Earls and equal Ladies, and the independent Barons and plebeian Baronesses: something that would enable the mechanical, and mercantile, and professional nobles of the land to drive away the eternal ennui that hung like the ghost of a money-collector to them, and followed them like the shade closes with the substance. What could be done? if the white-gloved nobility, the juvenile fashionables, and the sons and daughters of former butchers, and bakers, and tinkers, and candle-makers, and money-sweaters, and auctioneers, and cobblers, whose wardrobe was divested of every stain of the ancestor's trade the moment it appeared in fashionable society were inactive—what could be done? if such, and other ambitious spirits that soared above the columns of the parvenue regiments, would not volunteer their coin to sustain the great and glorious opera, why, as a matter of plain import, the circle of Peers and Peeresses, the upper nobility of this ultra democratical sovereignty, the speculators, the unsweating Brokers, the transcendental Bankers, and supereminent Merchant Princes—a new race of yankee royalty recently discovered in Boston—and their heirs and invited must sustain the foreign artists, and subscribe a sum equal to the anticipated expenses at least? This was the very affair to be offered for debate, and agitated in the house of the rich Seisers, which, as we hinted, might be considered the house of republican Peers; but the debates, though in all the intellectual features equal to, would not endure as long as those in, another house of Peers, where money makes a feast and talents fatten on it.

People sooner determine to waste money than apply it in acts of benevolence; and this fact would necessarily curtail the proceedings relative to the subscription.

The company, in their colored and costly investments, entered the apartment of the banker, amid the smiles of all the family; and the visitors were welcomed with all the ceremony that distinguish people who show no other trait of character but the slight forms that may be termed the fashionable surface of cold politeness. There was punctilious adherence to the graceful gesture, the monosyllabic whispers, and distant salutations; but there was nothing that should always rise from the heart—that welcome that belongs in a good heart, travels round it, lingers with it, is warmed by it, and is frequently announced by an unaffected and generous smile. Charity, with such people, could claim no moment, no time, nor give audience to the solemn tone of benevolent reflection; the servitors in the kitchen doled out the refuse of their own table to the beggar, while the high and the fashionable doled out the refuse of Chesterfield's table to their visitors, and in a manner that might challenge the eye of a casuist.

There appeared Mr. Mildew, an attorney and counsellor, who inherited his father's business, but not one quarter of his parent's talents, not one eighth part of his industry, and none of the plain simplicity that carried his father through an honorable life. Mr. Mildew was one of the automatons who dance upon the wires of credit, with not enough money to pay his own debts, but with avidity ready to pay his subscription to the operatic fund with the money of other people. There, too, was Mrs. Changeful, who acted independent of her husband, having a separate estate which she could lavish upon the opera; and it was said that she had a step-daughter who earned a small living by the dint of assiduous industry, but this was never whispered in fashionable society, because it would shock

the nerves of the sweet little Mrs. Changeful to be told that she found it convenient to spend a few thousands on the exotic masters of bow and fiddle, and left in her cold path of helpless privation and misery a relative, and a deserving one. Mrs. Changeful was one of the ardent friends of the cause, the most industrious to create and sustain the subscription list, and all, it was whispered by Col. Bones, because she knew less of music of any and every kind than any other ear in the listening dilettanti.

There, too, was Mr. Team, an idler, and sometimes an unwilling witness of the exploits of fashionable society; but Mrs. Team and her twenty thousand dollars, both of which he took at the same time for better or for worse, as so many mint-drops that might lose their odor, induced him to pay his respects wherever the lady commanded, and also to subscribe liberally to any approved amusement, and the opera particularly, if the performers were the right kind, and sung in a foreign tongue, she being overcome and induced to faint at the mere sound of an English song—which certainly demonstrated that she wanted some other air.

There, too, was a shrewd, cunning overreacher and dealer in stocks, and speculator in lands, by the name of Horace Stovepipe, with his lady on his arm, who was determined to be known as a patron of fine Italian hornblowers, and ready and willing to give one thousand dollars in order to obtain a family box in the opera, wherein to entertain the Mayor and Aldermen, but not the commonalty and other temporary right honorable magistrates, who for a short time become inflated with corporate rights, and plenary powers, and the strong box of a city.

Then came, also, young Mr. Lipbuter, a man twenty-one years and three months old, with a fortune secured by tight investment, who was a dunce from the desk of the pedagogue, and as a necessary consequence, a man devoted to fashion: he was a devotee to the sex, and an admirer of all ladies; and having money to support anything that would draw the attention of ladies to him, he was willing to draw on his bankers to bring about the splendid puffs of a Milanese flutist, who warbled most eloquently with that member of the instrumental orchestra.

Then, also, appeared Mr. Col. Bones, a man over the middle age, with a head of gray hair, which was regreted by his mate whom he had married with all her goods and chattels, afloat and ready to be transferred and pocketed: at the instance of his rich and beautiful wife they had come, though much against his desire, to subscribe a certain sum in aid of the charming objects which the visitors had in view. Often was it known that poor old Mr. Bones was compelled to leave the house of performance before the latter terminated, on account of rheumatism; and also leave his tender little dove to the mercy of a half dozen fops in white gloves, who were more gallant to married ladies than single ones, on account of the forlorn condition of the former, left, perhaps, by their gray-haired champions, to drink Italian in company with ignoramuses.

There were, also, Mr. and Mrs. and the Miss Copperlop, who, seized with a holy horror for all sounds of home manufacture, were determined to surrender a large sum—not to, but at discretion: in fact, any sum they could raise, as they were enthusiastically imbued with the subject, and contemplated shortly to take the tour of Europe, and deemed it necessary before starting to learn something—even in sound—of sublime Italian; thinking it but one degree removed from the native tongue of the Plinys, and their ancestors, to be stock of the Sabines.

Then came, also, Mr. Selfish, who never was born for himself nor his country—no; but for his fair countrywomen and Italy, and all the sounds that could be produced by the blower of its trombones: he was a bachelor, in the fields of the law, and plucked the fruit as it fell when shaken by litigious winds; he wore white kid gloves, and had some money, the scrapings of his early retainers in the Marine Court, and intended after a broad look to make a sudden dash upon the affections of a rich widow, her dimes and dower; or the heart of an heiress in possession or reversion. And Mr. Selfish appeared very eager to tack his name to the list, and thus open a field that would present many objects that might favor his matrimonial views.

Among the visitors were a Mr. Deficient and his wife, who were reputed to be so rich, that everybody nodded and raised their hats when passing by them, even the Presidents and Porters of banks, and other equally high figures in the commercial price currents. None had the slightest knowledge of Mr. Deficient's real situation and circumstances; and he and his lady came to put down as small a sum as would pass, upon the plea of recent heavy losses—such pleas in fashionable society circulating merely in whispers. The couple were only worth about fourteen hundred dollars a year, the ordinary salary of a good pale-faced bank clerk; although the senseless units in the circle of fashion had made them out worth nearly a million, without a chick or a child. They bore the adventitious incumbrance with patience and pride, and ate the dinners and drank the magnum bonum wines of others, with the sober dignity of grandees, for several years; and continued to do so without one solitary voice to hint that Mr. Deficient was wearing feathers that rightly belonged to the temples of ano-

ther; and what was better, eating dinners where wood-cock was basted with silver threads, and partridges with gold ones, and the wines were served in goblets with linings of ice that never melted.

So close were he and his own delightful Mrs. D—, that the whole mass of dinner-dividing people could not penetrate the secret of his being but a common man. If it had transpired that he was not a gem of their magnitude, how many cold brows would he have met in the morning walk! how many would have passed him as a man only in the middle ranks of the medium-paid clerks! with no silver rays of independence floating around his name and fame, to light his steps in the sacred walks of fashion.

There were others present, the same in magnitude of character and golden traits; and some might be styled duplicates of the angelic Peers whom we have endeavored to introduce.

The circle being complete, much conversation was had in relation to the professional caste of the individuals who composed the engaged opera troupe, from the manager down to the lowest drum-beater; the ladies wishing to be fully satisfied that the characters imported to blow or sing, to beat or flourish, possessed the requisite qualifications, and had been spoken of by the leading amateurs and newspaper paragraphists in laudatory terms; no other could be tolerated—so it was expressly decided by every one present except Col. Bones, who happened to be in a doze from an over-dose of Mr. Seiser's champagne; and none was more arbitrary on the point than Mrs. Changeful, who, knowing nothing about musical matters, and being incapable of detecting mal-feasance in the play of a horn-blower, was the first to agitate the question of competency.

The gentleman who knew most about such matters was Mr. Lipbuter, who pledged his honor for the undoubted standing of every member of the opera company; especially was there the requisite amount of mustache, and hair, and imperial, without which what would an Italian monkey be worth? Mr. Lipbuter had been introduced to all of them for the purpose of showing his address, and informing them that he, Mr. Lipbuter, No. 9 Golden Court, parlor floor, was a leader of the sterling band of operatic lovers, whose chief aim was to induce the nobility of a new country to quit the nasal twang of their ancestry, and take with him a musical bath in the element of pure Italian. Mr. Lipbuter was confirmed by Mr. Selfish, who had also exhibited his white gloves to the descendants of the titled lazaroni of Naples.

"Well, gentlemen," said the great Seiser, "we can arrange briefly; let each mark on his card the amount to be advanced, and then the canvass will show whether the aggregate will satisfy or not."

"My dear," said Mrs. Seiser, "don't you stint."

"No, pa," said Emily, "that would be frightful."

"Mr. Changeful," said Mrs. C—, "recollect what I stated."

"Mr. Bones," said Mrs. Col. Bones, "you understand our sum."

"Mr. Copperlop," observed his lady and daughter in one breath, "be liberal, dear."

"Mr. Mildew," cried Emily, "don't let the opera languish"—

"Not as much as some Dutchesses do I've seen there," put in Mr. Mildew, with a smile that blunted his own satire.

"Mr. Lipbuter," said Julia, "you know what's expected"—

"Airs—from Italy and the ladies—of course," said Mr. L.

"Mr. Stovepipe," said his wife, "match Mr. Seiser, my dear."

"Mr. Deficient," said Victoria, "don't *be* deficient."

"Mr. Team, my dear, don't let the plan fall on our account," said Mrs. Team, who meant to say, "give my money, my dear—you always do."

All the cards being gathered in, with the sums named which the owner was willing to advance, Mr. Seiser declared upon a count that the aggregate was ample, and that the arrangement could be made immediately, without discussion or question. When all the movements had been made in regard to subscriptions, and the thing was settled, the ladies all felt as if they had gained a point, the heart's ultimate wish, beyond which there was nothing either for the eye to search or the ear to open. The gentlemen whose subscriptions were lowest in point of amount, were in quite as ecstatic a state of mind as the females, who had some hope of marrying a militia major, or a merchant whose paper was unimpeachable itself, without an endorser, or a lawyer, who, having risen from "office sweeper" to "counsellor," was pure and thrice cleansed of his former bad odor, by the accumulation of gold wrung from the face of penury or the coffer of a monied corporation; besides the chance of casting a net for some foreigner of distinction, rich or poor—but the former preferable—and especially one who wore large whiskers, mustaches, or an imperial, and burdened with a title purchased on the Continent, for one hundred pounds sterling money. Such men were frequently seen in the crowded street with white gloves and large canes, and an eye that never missed its mark in selecting a fashionable lady, the heir expectant of the owner of large coffers; or the heir in possession of a plum, to use the language of foreign taste.

Indeed, when we consider the many advantages which the opera would afford to the male and female searchers after those eleusinian mysteries—the silver store, and the husband with a store of silver—it is not to be wondered at that such overstrained exertions were made to forward subscriptions, secure private boxes, and let it be known throughout the entire ramifications of unexceptive society, that such and so many persons and families were the chief projectors and supporters of the elegant entertainments.

"Now, my dear Mrs. Seiser," said Mrs. Changeful, the lady with a separate estate, "do let your box be adjoining ours; for if one should be forced to listen to a dull piece, it is so much pleasure to turn the attention to conversation, especially if one is alone."

The lady might have continued to say, but she could not make the admission, that she never in the course of her existence played a single air or turned a solitary tune, either by a scientific sheet of bars, or by the instruction of the ear. She never could learn a note or hum a tune; there appeared no one spot in her memory capable of retaining the sounds of music; to her it was all the rude roughness of a summer wind, and the noise of the orchestra, in their play of a concerted piece of music, was that same wind dashing its wild gust of loud roar in the hurrying clamor of the swift tempest.

If it should be asked why such an one left the domestic circle to repair to the opera at an enormous expense, it may be stated that the life of a fashionable married lady is no life at all if confined within the circle of home, where good sense would fix it. No; home is not to fashionable people the domestic altar whence rise the pure perfume of this earth's chiefest happiness. Home gets to be a desert, and the idle and the frivolous must be enlisted to make the path tolerable, when common sense has ceased to apply its moderate rule, and the heart flies out in the world to seek for an antidote to the dulness that spreads over it. To such a woman, who never touched the string of an instrument nor a needle that might have been used to adorn or instruct, home was of all places the most dull and unsatisfactory that the city could afford an indweller. The opera was the fashionable climax, and there perhaps with a husband who was forced to spend her money as she dictated, this lady might be seen dressed in that critical mode which the dress-maker from France assured her customers was not to be questioned. The husband on such occasions acted as the gallant, until the young gentlemen in white gloves and with rings on the fingers, and hair parted in a bed of imported grease, were bowed in, as men whose light and frivolous conversation was better suited to please the lady than the conversation of a husband, dull and prosy, and perhaps altogether too domestic

So it might be observed of all those married ladies wherever fashion was convened in the persons of her worshippers. There the heads, as unimproved as the dolt at the milk-churn, were seen decorated with every flower that art could produce by its humble but successful endeavors at imitation, and with jewels that disfigure beauty, and make the exterior of the thoughtless head of more value than all its stores contained within.

The subscription was filled, the family of the rich Seiser leading off in the bestowal of about three thousand dollars, and the other rare and gold-encumbered people following in less sums, the whole amounting to about ten thousand dollars to be cast upon a few Italian adventures, who were to sing and enact various pieces for about three months, for the especial edification of the rich donors, idle clerks, lawyers' book-keepers, mercantile drummers who can borrow funds, married ladies, and single ones, foreign counts, and traveling mimes, all well-known as the American nobility, whom some queer people have designated as those who live in idleness upon the labor of others whose dress is plain and whose sense is too common.

It was on the nights of performance, however, when the Dukes and Dutchesses, the Earls and Ladies, the Maids of Honor, and Barons and Counts, and all the super-distinguished republican circle, derived their chief reward for all their immense expense and outlay in trifles and gewgaws; when the streams of blended and brilliant lights poured their illumination, from polished chandeliers and gorgeous branches, in a spreading lustre that made every eye visible, and every false flower look like the primitive circle of the unplucked rose; when every shining box contained the white brows of the young, the glowing cheeks of the smiling owner, the dark lines and lurid curls of the black hair, the pure bosom bound in the drapery of the rainbow's beauty, and where the broad fringes of the rich laces hung on arms where the golden glove lay as a being whose color was to show in quiet the bold contrast; where the blazing jewels glittered upon a thousand eyes, and the clad fingers raised their ivory glasses and the clustering colors of the rich boquet, to gain the wandering gaze, its attention and its admiration—and keep them all; where lovely heads were turned and glances returned, and nods were made, and maids were nodded to, and smiles were given to the mother, who passed them over to the gay lips of her heart's own daughter; and where a hand was given to the father, who grieved that it wasn't given to his eldest child in presence of the luxurious minister.

Then the elegant Mrs. Seiser would send

her card to the Prima Donna Signorina, Buzzy Puzzy Muzzy Duzzy, who would return the civility; and then Mrs. Seiser would glide into the dressing-room of the Signorina, and convey in graceful manner an invitation, and return to her seat. Then Mrs. Changeful, shaking her rosy head, would perform with the Donna Prima the very same acts; and then Mrs. Team, whose husband was trying to spend her gold and silver, would send in her card in bold glittering border, and presently follow it, and indulge a gesticulated passage with the Donna, and leave an invitation, and then retire to her box to report progress to Mr. Team; who, having no heart for the recital, had perhaps fallen asleep, and was dreaming of a double thunder-storm with tempestuous variations in the copper cistern of a distiller.

Then Mrs. Bones would dart in, determined to have value received for her subscription; and, preceded by a servant, go through the civil process, while Col. Bones, taking a bank clerk by the button, would be found in the lobby, discussing the rate of exchange between Frying-pan shoals and Great Egg Harbor.

It made no difference who the Signorina had been in her own country; the Atlantic ocean is a very broad and deep stream, if report speaks true, and is known to purify any thing that crosses it; and so it should, for it contains a great quantity of salt, and its antiseptic and curative powers had been tried on English, French, Italian and German, and even on those who finger with delicacy the provoking strings of the Scotch fiddle.

Then the great Mr. Seiser would send in his card to the Emperors of the Basso, Tenore, and Buffo; and these celebrated and distinguished exotics—celebrated for howling, and distinguished for hair—would send their address, as much as to say, "at the service of Seiser and his service of plate." Then the other gentlemen subscribers would send in to the same men and the manager, and be treated similarly—as the Italians are a hungry set, and will give a song for a dinner at any period.

No questions were asked as to the character of the people to whom cards were forwarded, that was an unconsidered matter; the fiddler was deemed a Prince, the horn-blower a Doge, the flutist a Don, and the lugubrious bass-scraper, a Governor of the Bridge of Sighs—equivalent to a modern Turnkey.

In the box of the banker, soon after the commencement of the opera, might be seen various critical amateurs, descanting with the language of a great judge upon the actors, and shaking the wise head; and now and then—sotto voce—uttering, "shocking."

"It's delightful, Mrs. Seiser," would utter one, who the next moment encountered Mrs. Bones, and condemned the whole performance, and smiled to hear the lady agree in the opinion.

Then, in the box of the Seisers, Mrs. Team would be harassed nearly to death, by the encomiums lavished upon Phizzy Nizzy, because the former could not detect a single passage of harmony in all that the aforesaid Phizzy Nizzy murmured; and when the drop-scene would fall, crowds of fashionable figures might be seen, some of the males taking snuff and some venturing an opinion, and all agreeing with the ladies when the latter ventured to decide; especially the sweet Mrs. Changeful, whose head would be aching with Italian noises. Ladies stood talking to the young and gay drummers of the mercantile regiments, who had called in cosmetics, and rumor said corsets, to enable them to sustain themselves in such a transcendent display of extravagance.

Every girl whose silent boast was the beauty of her own face or figure, or fashionable self, was looking wherever a beau of the current stamp was to be seen, and when recognized as such, he was saluted in that pure mode of soft and graceful courtesy that belongs to woman alone, and can never be aped by the males, although the latter endeavor to look in exact semblance of that animal, and not alone by the aid of hair.

Sometimes, while the enthusiastic lovers of operatic thunder were attentive to the deafening jars of human, and trumpet, and kettle-drum voices, a circumstance would occur that quite appalled the nobles and nonnies, the patricians and parvenues of finished education and elevated souls.

One night the sweet and sweetly-scented Mrs. Bones, while in earnest conversation with a young clerk, on a salary of ninety cents per week, and an independent bachelor who borrowed a suit to display that very night, was taken suddenly ill, and when the cause was ascertained, it was found to be a simple case of tight lacing—a class of diseases well known in fashionable society—although Col. Bones declared, with the face of an absolute dictator, and pledged his word of honor, that his lady was absolutely overcome with the blended sounds of the first and second fiddles; a fact that he felt proud of—as proud as proud flesh—and he whispered to several of his confidential friends that Mrs. Molly Dolly Adeline Cecelia Julia Columbiana Henrietta Cornelia Bones, his wife, yes, the amiable lady of him, Colonel Bones, of the 790th Regiment of New York Militia, was a woman whose ear for music was so fine and mull-mull muslin-like, that he, the Militia Col. Bones, had found it necessary to stop the whistle of the butcher-boy in the morning, to debar the housemaids the privilege of

humming antediluvian airs, and caution his eldest boy never to play "Yankee-doodle" on his silver jewsharp: all of which was done lest the fine ear for music possessed by Mrs. Bones, the wife of that militia Col., should lose the thin creations of heavenly sounds that alone could improve her; and until she bloomed in the beauties of an Italian sunset of science, nothing of grosser sound than pure operatic could be allowed to insult her studies or shock the Neapolitan drum of her sensitive and delicate ear.

On another evening a tall straight lawyer was seized with fainting in a private box, as if he had been enchanted with orchestral sounds, but when in a private room he was disrobed of some exterior clothing, he was found to have a pair of opera braces so tightly laced, that it was with difficulty the same was removed; and the gentlemen who aided in restoring him were so affected by what they saw, that they burst into loud laughter, to think that a member of the bar should put on a straight jacket, and not make it a present to his client as a receipt in full for liquidated costs.

One night, too, too much attention, in the opinion of the sleepy Mr. Team, had been shown to his lady by an officer, whose whiskers, and gloves, and eye-balls, were nearly of the same color: he was a high liver, and had recently rose from a bed of yellow jaundice, and Mr. Team calling him from the box, the following conversation ensued:

"Your name, sir," said Mr. Team, coolly.

"Major Fireblast, sir; Marines, 97th," said the officer.

"Are you aware that lady is my wife, sir?" said Team.

"I was not, sir," responded the Major.

"She is, sir," said Team, proud of a woman who informed him how and when to spend her own money, "and must be hereafter exempt from your attentions."

"Undoubtedly, sir—I beg your pardon; I took you, sir, to be her grandfather," said Major Fireblast, moving off with a step four inches longer than the military, and leaving poor Team on the eve of laughing at himself.

But the purified character of the nobilitated society, especially the sterling merit of mercantile drummers, members of the Jockey Club, and the club-houses, precluded other than slight disagreements which necessarily arise where there are so many single ladies who want and receive attentions, and so many married ones that don't wish the attentions of husbands, when they can command every loose member of moneyless state; nobles from terra incognita, peers from solitary confinement, Jew brokers, clerks and clowns, all of unimpeachable whisker. The ladies were often left wholly to the discourse of such butterflies, while in the lobby might be seen the subscribers in full debate about the origin of music, and its descent through the Biblical and profane times, until it was lodged in the singular lungs of the eunuchs of Italy. Mr. Bones contended that music arose with the cry of the first child; Mr. Copperlop inclining to the opinion that it came in the cry of that child's mother; and Mr. Changeful, that it arose with the first snore of that mother's father; and Mr. Team, that its advent was in the first roar of the ancient thunder; to which Mr. Seiser agreed, and added that it was only loudness of sound which made people fond of opera, where the sounds could not be outroared without ruining the sense of hearing.

It was in the great finale that all attention was paid, as the whole operatic piece was so framed as to bring in that grand scene all the noises ever heard in Italy or out, entitled to the name of music. When this boisterous part of the play was commencing every lady and male amateur was seated in suspense, and some cautiously plugged one ear, as if wishing to be deafened only in one organ; and if Mr. Bones or Mr. Team happened to be in a doze, the noise of the progressing variations was sure to startle them like the sheet-iron clap of theatrical thunder. Some ladies held their kerchiefs to their ears; and Mrs. Changeful always inserted a stopper of Alabama cotton into her orifices, although she praised the finale as the sweetest part of the night's entertainment.

The first commencement of the vast finale was very moderate, and was made by the leader of the band touching as it were the sensitive eye of a flat note with the sharp point of a needle, while the second fiddler followed modestly, by appearing to vibrate an invisible hair that shook an audible murmur from the face of a single string; then followed a flute note, an effort from four violins in one scrape, four semitones by the leader and second, a growl from the bass, a groan from the bassoon, scrapes by all fiddlers, and blended play by all the instruments, mixed with the singers' shouts, that screamed on the stage, and the finale was in boisterous concert. There a fiddler worked his arms and fingers incessantly, while others scraped, and halted, and scraped and ceased, as if for ever; a trumpeter raised his coils of brass and blew a shake, and sunk to rest, and drained his machine; then a groan went bursting from a bass viol that wound off like the murmur of a hackney-driver with a heavy cold and a sore head; then the trombone threw its five feet of metal out in the tempest of wind, as if to summon all the windy family of mankind to boisterous battle. There, too, the bloated cheeks of another trumpeter swelled out hugely as if near exploding with

gale of wind inside, determined to grow ith inflation, while tears left the trumpeter's es as if to tell of interior agony; then the arionet-player, whose face was as sharp as e toothache, endeavored to compete in ows with the blasting trumpeter; and a an with hair-enveloped lips blew a reed that peared to have vegetated in his mustache, hile the leader's head moved as if on wires, d the dons on the stage, and all the donnas d madonnas, rolled, and raved, and reveled, d roared, with all the power of patent lungs, rowning the scouring of the kettle drum, d raising the audience into the regions of tonishment! The ladies in the boxes seemd delighted with the clamor of the time, and e noddies around them cried "bravo," and apped their gloves pregnant with meaning d white powder; and on again moved the under of the sleepless time, with fiddles at groaned a bass lament, and horns that welled the faces into flesh balloons, and ounds from bass drums: and when the tresendous maestoso commenced, the whole ass of wood and metal pipes, and dons and onnas, strained as if each wanted to part ith all their willing wind as soon as the air ould be ejected; and high notes, and short roans, and loud thumps, and raps, and taps, d continuous scrapes, and big screams, and udden starts from prima and primo, and lessr mimes, with drawling notes and creeping assages, continued in combined and amalgamated uproar, until all got breathless, windess, and stunned by their own tempest, when uddenly all the sharps fell flat, and the flats ell dead and silent!

Then up rose the elegant Peers and Peeresses, the splendid Dukes and gratified Dutchesses, whose duckatoons had brought he musical ducks from the plains of Italy, he single Earls and bachelor Barons, and all he males shouted bravo, and the females whispered, "happy Signorina;" and the old gentlemen put on their spectacles, and looked s if they had run the gauntlet between the legs of roaring lions from Lombardy; and the young gentlemen—the juvenile heirs of the titled papas and exclusive mamas, and others whose heirdoms made up the invisible spot called terra incog—thought the thing was extremely fine and cheap withal, as many had borrowed the gilders with which they could take a peep at the gilded.

Subsequently the Signorina Buzzy Puzzy Muzzy Duzzy would receive an elegant bouquet, valued at twenty-five dollars, from the liberal Dutchess of a modern candle-maker, or vender of re-sold furniture; and the busy and accomplished little Mrs. Changeful would forward a note of compliment to the same lady of musical notes, although the ears of the former contained a stopper to prevent the intrusion of choice sounds. Then Mrs. Col. Bones would throw the beauty of her embossed card on the table of the donna number two, and leave her also a smile whose sweetness had won the Colonel, and was worth in his estimation a thousand copper-colored donnas, and all the grimaces that distorted the face of any donna.

At length the risen circle of proud patronizers would pile upon their bedizzened selves the furs, and cashmeres, and silk-lined robes, and would be gallanted down to the hackney, praising in the mean time, and most exaltedly, that of which they knew little, and remembered only the clamor and deafening crash. All the company of subscribers were loudest in their encomium upon the performances and performers, as if eager to prove to each other that the money had been exchanged for value received. Mrs. Col. Bones and Mrs. Changeful would retire home, and seize a camphor bottle to lull the grievance of the light head, while their husbands would retire, to dream that an army of patent sweepers were scraping every flue in the mansion, and that the midnight operators, losing their holds in the passages, fell below on tin pans and brass utensils, bellowing fire through trumpets of enormous sound and capacity, while, perhaps, the great banker would dream that he was discounting all the notes of all the performers at four per cent. a month, and in that way endeavoring to bring back the loss by subscription; with the exception of the kettle drummer's performance, the notes of which were too domestic to be cashed at any percentage known on the moral road, where paper has an enormous beard, to judge of the incessant shaves it sustains from the hands of monetary barbers!

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Cavern for punishing the suspected, and the Court for canvassing the MERITS *of horse-flesh.*

When Samuel Crisp awoke in the barred stall of the stable, denominated "Watch house," early on the morning succeeding his arrest for an assault on the tall sailor, the former was called by the classic scholar known by the title "Captain." in the Corporation laws, and who is sometimes insulted by the modern soubriquet, "Charley," Sam, by the gentlemanly scholar aforesaid, was given in charge of two men who parted with him in search of the Police office; the distance was short, and they soon arrived at that notorious nursery of humanity, benevolence, and other virtues, too numerous to particularize: the person on the bench was called "Justice"—and if justice were always personated

by such a picture, the family of mankind would seldom enter the temple in search of the ancient—or modern—virtue. The present personater of the great Justice was a man over the middle size, with a large head and a countenauce rubicond, and altogether of the common intelligence of an animal: his questions were put in the tones of a growling dog, and it appeared as if he wished to hurry home for breakfast and a dram. Mr. Crisp swore to the complaint against the tall sailor, who turned round and gave his complaint to the justice. The sailor was committed, as no bail was promised for him; and Mr. Crisp was sent for a season where all are sent until bail or trial exonerate them.

There were several cases out of the watch houses disposed of before Sam quit the office, and one was the case of an old woman who was found in a precarious state of health, and she was benevolently shown in a hole where the air in twenty-four hours would have terminated life. The next was a man who seemed in the state of mindlessness which emaciated old age exhibits in the pauper. The man called Justice, behaved towards the old prisoner as if the latter had been marked with evidences of crime; and the brief mode of disposing of the case was not the worst feature in the "job," as the magistrate termed it: there was a want of feeling in all the latter said and did, not generally supposed to exist in the rough moulds of the open world—even in the tainted and felonious;—a want of feeling that must, upon reflection, result in disgust in the mind of the actor himself, although few escape this want of humanity, who gain authority: and why is it? what is it that appears to bury all humane characteristics when the robe of power is assumed? Nature remains unchanged—the man himself. Does the poor afford the opportunities, which the small mind aspires to, of exercising dominion? and if so, could it not be done humanely? the worst form of humanity is a brute in authority, who leaves his own nature home, and takes the dog's—in his office!

Mr. Crisp was committed for a slight assault, not for any heinous offence that invokes the severity of the law's rule; yet this man was taken to a common cell, where the burglar and the common stabber, the counterfeiter, bigamist, and murderer, were all mixed together, without regard to the crimes committed, their enormity or insignificance: man, brute, and boy, were confined by the Christian's mandate—the one to teach the other to learn—all to be punished before trial!

When the turnkey received Mr. Crisp, he searched the latter, and took every article he had for safe keeping; telling him that if he ventured into the cell with the most trifling article, it would be filched before noon. Sam observed carelessly that that might not happen, as he supposed he could resist assaults; but as it was customary, he would submit to the inconvenience. The turnkey then led him from the ante-cell through a passage that turned on a right angle, and the person in attendance having opened the door, Samuel Crisp walked in, and the large iron grating closed for the first time on him and liberty. The prisoner stood by the door some time, with a countenance neither of sorrow nor anger, but one of much curiosity, glancing its eyes into the cell to see the animals—for none looked as men—crawling and dragging around the damp place: it was a large cell, without an article save benches and the uncased straw, like the horse-beds of a stable.

If a fiend had petitioned a Christian community to punish a man before his trial, and had pleaded absolute malice, deep, bloody and revengeful for such request, and the prayer of the petitioner had been granted, this cell was the very spot where the community would have placed the victim!

When Mr. Crisp ventured further in the interior, several of the graduates caught him by the shoulder, and commenced feeling his several pockets for their unknown contents.

Sam, without temper, but with much force, jerked himself clear from the dirty gang, and then cautioned them on the danger of trifling with a stranger, who had no objection to exchange civilities of the striking sort, provided they kept at a distance. This intimation created a smile in one red-haired fellow, as weak as water from continual dissipation, and a loud laugh in another, as soiled as the dirt he trod on; and a third, uttering an oath, declared that he never saw the bully that could tussle with him, and he approached Mr. Crisp, hostilely: the dirt upon the fellow disgusted Sam, and the latter, to avoid a contact, and with all the strength he could command in a single blow, struck him down, and the fall of the fellow on the earth reverberated through the cavern.

The whole gang stood as if in wonderment—not that a man had fallen, nor that he had been struck; but the power of the blow, the sound it made, and the sudden fall of the prisoner, as if forced by a bolt of thunder, seemed to rivet the eyes of the whole.

"Vy, damn me, me cast iron chap," said a dirty, unshaven fellow, "you've a fist like a stone hammer."

"Think so?" said Sam; "then you keep clear, and it won't crush ye."

The dirty fellow smiled, went back among the mass of corruption, and the man who had been struck down retired to a seat in the rear, without speaking, nor offering to renew the combat: none offered to trouble Sam; he stood unapproached, calmly gazing at the whole group, and looked as innocent as if nothing had occurred.

They gathered around the man who received the blow, and a conversation ensued between them, but there was no laugh and sneer, and looking at Sam, as if to jeer him. An old man approached Sam, and told him he did right to keep the fellows off, though he must be careful at night, as they were desperate, and might maim a man they disliked with an easy clearance, as none could be distinguished after dark.

Sam answered the old sinner that he did not intend to be maimed by a dozen or single one, as he had the means to prevent it, and thanked the informant.

The whole gang remained near the prostrated prisoner, as if the cowardice of the entire number prevented a dispersion, as was their customed state.

There was an old man incarcerated, awaiting his trial for some four burglaries, which had evinced an experience in the art of plunder that might have taken a whole life to learn; he had been in prisons in several states, and received a sentence for five or ten years with all calmness and philosophy. He was a man of blunted feelings, no conscience, and one who deemed life a highway bound to yield money on his demand; he knew no home, nor child, nor mother; alone, without mind enough to be re-called to the path of honor, he seemed an outcast with the form of man, and no power to exert thought for any other than a felonious purpose. He would laugh with any and talk with any; none were too bad for his approach, his contaminating contact and leprous mind; and several small boys had been listening to his account of hair-breadth escapes, in venturing on what he termed "a mooner," that is, a midnight burglary.

There was a small boy of about thirteen years old, familiar with the whole gang, and in possession of more cunning than belonged to some of the elder villains. What a place for boys, thought Sam Crisp, as the fellow approached him and begged a small piece of tobacco.

At eight years the boy was lazy, and gathered chips in ship-yards to sustain the kitchen fire of his mother; a couple of years' advance in life made him familiar with the petty larceny of the dock-boys: you might have seen him inserting a stick in the small hole perforated in a tea-chest, and filching a pocket full, or at a sugar-tierce drawing out the sugar, and clapping it in a bag in his bosom. Practice makes perfect in the evil as in the evilless roads of life, and the small abstracter of tea and sugar soon became bold, and ventured to enter houses, and take at some risk whatever was left loose for the eye and finger: impunity emboldens, and night offers a season for the practices of the bold robber. The boy gradually neglected his mother's house, fraternized with the thieves that sleep on docks, under boats, among the timber of the city ship-yards, and even on the masses of compost that sometimes remain on squares or docks, to poison the air breathed by the neighboring women, and men, and children, and engender diseases, for the payment of the cure of which they have no means; which is supposed to be the very reason why the public authorities suffered the creation and continuance of the nuisance.

The boy soon arrived at the maturity of a reckless robber, although his age was prior to the period of the formation of judgment: at steam boat wharves as principal, and at the night burglaries as assistant, he acted with shrewdness and address, and escaped all danger. Sometimes he might be seen in the centre of the street picking the off-cast sweepings of a manufactory or store, for that which might purchase liquor or tobacco; and then in the very centre of the thronged pavements, where men went by happy in a future promise of gain, or proud in possession of all that life required: who was there to pity that boy? to take him by the hand? to pass a gentle finger on his brow? to whisper reason to his opening mind? to offer the easy words of persuasion to him, and ask him to sin no more? He had no mother to take him from the wide fields of dishonor; no sister, whose affection would endure till life quit the stream of her young blood, to call him in a voice whose sounds were familiar in childhood; none—not one. The child hovered in the den of the base, and was learned in the guile and lessons of the blasphemous; not one of the thousand benevolent men that looked at his half-clothed form in the street, had a single thought that his young spirit might not be broken, and that he might yet regain the road of safety, and the sinless one; no—they passed on, and sent their stores of silver to foreign lands, to be used as empty enthusiasm had dictated, and left the poor of their own city to want in despair, die in the fulness of evil, and rot like the withered leaf.

One half of the money applied to distant objects, would have redeemed a thousand forms young in crime and baseness in their native city; but pride outwhispered common sense, and the golden store was sent over the blue path of the mountain waves in search of —— charity!

Contrast this boy with the little fellow whose parents were neighbors to the former: the one had a father, not rich nor in want, who compelled, by discipline, the mind to open on a path where hope twines with ambition, and the spirit rises in honor: a mother, not pressed by poverty and all its pains and blasting horrors, with a love for her boy, that seemed the single drop of divinity of which the weak nature of man can boast; the hand caressed

him, the heart taught him, and the mind's lessons moulded him for the stand of the man who arrives at majority, and feels the beneficial effects of the care, and the teachings, and the discipline of life's home: he enters life, and treads with industry and honor. Who can blame the outcast boy, where even the ministers of justice thrust him in a cell to take lessons of the masters of the art, the prosecution of which is to lead him to his final step, the platform of the gallows? whence he sees the mists of the earth recede and open, and he plunges, with the pale lip of a dying stabber, into Eternity!

There was another boy there more bold, and older than the first named, who was in conversation with a man who had killed another, and who would be indicted for manslaughter. The man looked like a murderer, and his savage countenance was such as to create a shudder in the timid: his eyes were blood-shot, his hair straggling in redundancy, his lips cut and bloody with congealed clods, his beard long and dirty, his face the swoln puffs of the bloated drinker, and his eyes covered with lowering brows that gave the final touch of a villain's portrait. He spoke without a smile, or any attempt at one; would grasp the fingers of a fellow prisoner, and nearly break the bone, with a countenance of calmness and careless seeming that appeared as if he relished the pain which caused the afflicted to cry in agony. The cry he deemed cowardice, as if a notion of feeling had no existence in his brain; and such a man would have throttled an infant, and gazed with the changeless countenance of an idiot at its dying face.

This was the one who received the blow from Sam, that kept him on the back bench of the prison, and confined him to that spot. Had Mr. Crisp been compelled to sleep in that cell, the light might have found him in the morning a maimed invalid, for the cruelty of his enemy would never have allowed the night to pass without revenge.

There were other men there, some put in for bigamy, a thing not understood by the boys until explained by the older adepts in crimes. Many were there for slight assaults; and it mattered not whether they were ever in custody before, they were compelled to mix with the veterans in all sorts of crimes punishable under the local rule or the common law. The very gas inhaled by the inmates was sufficient to disease the whole number; there being a stench arising from unwashed bodies and foul clothing, and bread nearly black, uneaten, and in a state of humid deterioration, which was kicked across the floor.

That such beings, sunk in the lowest depth of outlawed criminals, might be thus disposed of after being found guilty either upon trial or plea of admission, with some show of consistency, is true; but before any issue had terminated, or before any proof, except perhaps that of an interested witness, was made against a man, to thrust him accused only of a slight assault upon another into a den of vipers—where, if a latent spark of virtue existed in the young, it was immediately extinguished by the conversation and growls of the villainous—seemed, even in the eyes of Sam Crisp, ignorant as he was, to present a fair question, which deserved the execration of honest men, the authorities that placed the villains there, or the villains themselves?

Before the meridian of the day Sam Crisp had the pleasure to see the form of Captain John before the iron bars of the prison, with an order for his liberation, the Captain having satisfied the big headed Justice with the bail, which was little more than nominal. As Sam was about quitting the den for the instruction of youth in every crime, the fellow who had been struck shook his head, and pointing at the retreating form of Sam, spoke to his fellows:

"There, blast me, didn't I tell you he'd escape?"

"Vy, he's been watin' some hours for ye," said the old convict, "vy didn't ye pepper 'im?"

"Vot the devil's that your business, old Poppy? put a stone on your upper lip, and keep it there," said the first.

"If it been me, I'd a had one rip," said the old convict.

"The devil ye wood; now shut up, or we'll have a game of nine-pins wid your shin-bones, I'm damned if we don't, ha, me young plucks?" said the fellow, walking about as the door closed after Sam's egress.

The turnkey received his seventy-five cents, and the deputy at the same time was casting into the den the bread allowed to the prisoners: it was thrown in in the same manner the assistants in a menagerie cast the food to wild beasts, broken and inserted between the iron bars, and caught by the incarcerated, and barefooted, and hatless harpies with eagerness, and ate with the earnestness of starved pensioners.

"Why, Sam," said the Captain, "I did not learn until an hour ago that you had been put into this den; it was late before the word was brought by Angelica; however, you don't seem to have suffered much."

"No," said Sam, "I left a mark on wos poor devil, who wanted to rob me; if he gits rid of it before it meets the hangman's eyes, he'll have a great doctur, that's all."

"Did you hit him powerful?" asked the Captain.

"He didn't come near me arterwards," said Sam.

"Well, then, he must have been satisfied," said the Captain.

"I hope so," said Sam; "and now, where good I find Tom, I wonder; he was to load up this mornin'."

"He told me to say you'd find him at Old slip; and as I must go for the parchment to Counsellor Stir's, I'll leave you."

"Well, I'll cut down, then, Captin."

Sam took his course for the lower part of the city, and the Captain bent his walk towards the office of Counsellor Stir, who had completed the deed, and had the same duly acknowledged and ready for delivery: there were certain formal certificates required, which could be obtained without the aid of Mr. Stir or his friend, Mr. Paper, an attorney, or Mr. Rod, another attorney, who all took office fees, emoluments, retainers and profits, share and share alike, including fees for shipping sailors.

Their office was situated fronting the river, below Corlear's Hook, and no less than seven signs covered the door of the honored tenement. The Notarial business, which included the shipping trust, was done by Paper; the Commissioner's business by Rod, and the Counsellor's briefs were made by Stir—the former was a justice's court runner; Mr. Rod passed around the evil spirits, white, black or yellow. of the Criminal Court, and Mr. Stir frequently appeared in the Common Pleas Court, and at other times advised and consulted with the other members of this funny firm; and to him resort was had for all the precedents, material or mental, and also all the lugubrious lumber of learned law.

The members of this firm of lore and legal lights were without doubt the most happy men in the whole profession, doing a double duty daily, viz: practising at the bar of a court and the bar of a grocery; as fast as money was received through the aid of the bar of court, it was passed out by the aid of the grocery bar; showing to the world a most beautiful and practical illustration of the old maxim, "that whatever is obtained over the devil's back will be sure to slip under his belly!" At nine o'clock, when the firm reached the office, after the brief salutatory addresses had passed, a motion to adjourn to "Stonebiter's," the grocer's, was carried nem. con.; and no instance of that motion being negatived was ever known while the firm had a nine-penny piece. The mode of putting the question was a sample for legislators; thus:

"Ahem! ahem!" said Mr. Stir, smacking his lips and expectorating.

"Think so," said Paper, rising and expectorating.

"Well, 'tis time," said Rod, rising to walk.

All three put on their beavers or furs, and each smiling the blandest of all smiles—the smile of a dry drinker—passed in to the shop of Stonebiter, the most "respectable" grocer on the block, and swallowed a brandy and water strong and suitable: and then the grocer or his deputy would sweep the ninepence in the drawer, with the wet remark, "quite rainy, Counsellors."

There was another mode of taking the question, wholly original, and omitted by Tommy Jefferson, Esqr., in his Legislative Manual: when the firm severally and individually had drunk twelve times during the day, each would hesitate—modesty sometimes, though very seldom, paralyzes a lawyer's tongue—whether to make the motion, "I move the firm drinks"—when Paper would rise to his full length, and stretching out his arms, allow his knife to fall to the floor: this was construed into a motion—it was one; the round ruler of Rod would fall quick as lightning, and as rapid as sound could follow sound, the paper-cutter of Stir was heard slapping the floor with its smooth face.

The firm arose with the precision of military men, one minute emerged their forms in the grocery, and a ninepenny piece and three glasses of brandy showed their beauty, the first to the grocer's boy, the last to the eager members of the spirited firm.

The Counsellor was a respectable-looking man, but somewhat flushed and rubicund in the countenance, as if bitten there by Stonebiter. Rod was a singular looking being, with a swoln pair of cheeks pale and dirty, as if the brandy, indignant at being swallowed raw, would not loan its color to his portrait. Paper had a sharp visage, small eyes and white face—the latter owing its color perhaps to the whiteness of the brandy he swallowed by the pint: he wore a coat made apparently for the back of his youngest brother, and of a color none could name; but that was no wonder, for practising in a justices' court will turn a coat, though not woven in a political loom.

The exchequer of the great firm sometimes became exhausted, and then the industry of the units to replenish was in character. Mr. Rod would hang round the Criminal Court, and with a bundle of papers folded in legal shape, and tied with red tape, watch the delinquents, and take a survey of white and black. Sometimes a negro burglar would catch his eye, to whom Rod would whisper, with dignity and some reserve:

"But I've no money," the negro would answer.

"Well, what can you raise?" put in Rod.

"About a dollar," would rejoin the black.

"Hand it over," would Rod whisper; "and I suppose you're guilty—speak out."

"Well, I guess I am."

"Very well—I'll take this—it's a mere an chovy—but consider me endeavoring to get your term shortened, and I think I can."

That would be the last the black could see

or hear of his modifier of terms and feed agent.

Mr. Rod would then fly to the Marine Court, and when a dozen people were standing near, he would take a new attorney by the arm, and complain with a loud voice that the Common Pleas Court was a flat nuisance, because his firm could never get their causes heard; and declare that a reform was necessary to reach the grievance, and that he, Rod, intended to invoke the aid of two Senators and a dozen Assemblymen on the subject, although such men did nothing but quarrel politically: still a drowning man would clench a straw, and even straw bail—being the smallest bail that could be used by a capsized man in a legal boat. Then he would laugh loud at his horrible pun upon a poor straw, and hold his bundle of papers so all could see them, and in the run of the day get a new suit. The moment a suit was got, it brought a retainer of five dollars—small, very, considering the ancient dignity of the Marine Court—and Rod would smile with all his glowing features, and give his card of the firm to the new client, having the three names of the firm thereon. Mr. Rod would think that three to five was fair, and as a safe rule a lawyer's costs ought to take three from every five dollars his client recovered; but after consideration, he would shake his head, and think the lawyer entitled to all that was recovered, by the moral rule, that a client battled to soothe his anger and a lawyer to enlarge his interest! and after another shake of his head, Rod would conclude absolutely that the clients of his firm ought to keep thanksgiving-day on their knees for dealing with gentlemen, and then thank heaven for not falling into the hands of pettifoggers.

When Mr. Rod could find no more retainers in the holy precincts of the Marine Court, he would run up to the Justices' Court, and take a seat with his partner, Mr. Paper. The latter happened this day before Justice Candlecater to be battling a constable in a cause where the plaintiff sued for the price of a horse sold to a clam-vender, which beast was warranted sound, and bought for three dollars and fifty cents, including liquor for four gentlemen; the vender, the vendee, Lob Teershedder, Esqr., the non-paying member of the New York Jockey Club, and another witness.

The defendant putting in a verbal plea called "non-assumpsit," insisted before the Justice that the nag could not have been warranted, and that the plaintiff knew that the nag aforesaid was blind in the off blinker, spasmodic in the near peeper, gouty in the near fore leg, rheumatic in the off fore leg, shrivelled in the near hind leg, paralyzed in the off hind leg, skin-bound on the tip of his nose, refused Scotch snuff as a medicine: moreover, had the heaves on his back, and wouldn't run away at the sound of a ninety-six pounder—a proof that he was deaf—he, the unfortunate nag, never having been ridden by a militia Colonel in white gloves and sky-blue pants.

To all the above the plaintiff's attorney, Mr. Paper, energetically answered, that "they had proved a bargain, which bore in all its details presumptive evidence of being an express covenant, and that the defendant had sold his client a horse which, by the very showing of the former, was only the shade of a sound nag. That at the time of the sale the horrible faults of the poor animal were purposely suppressed or conveniently exaggerated; and in fact it now appeared that for twenty years the gallant quadruped had merely smelt of oats, if not pulverized, his grinders being mere yellow shale; that for eighteen years his reputation was that of a spavined individual; that for fourteen years he had had intermittent rheumatics; that for twelve years his blinkers were globes of stone; that for ten years an amateur of cough syrup had heard the air of death in his consumptive breath; that for eight years he had been so skin-bound as to be mistaken for a self-propelling hair trunk; that so long as seven years anterior, patent sweeps had stopt singing, and whispered while looking at him, "botts;" that on his fifth birth-day a butcher's boy had sworn with characteristic energy that the nag was fit for slaughter, and volunteered to skin him with two flourishes of a patent cleaver, and at the same time a pill-doctor of animal instinct had gazed in his face, felt the thickness of his hoof, and stated that he had the liver-complaint, and offered to quiet his heaves with a box of 'No. 19 life-eradicating pills'—think of that, may it please your Honor," concluded Mr. Paper, with a face as solemn as a new-made sexton.

The constable who acted as the Counsel for the defence, here rose with the garrulity of an unlettered man, and talked of every horse under heaven, except the nag in question; but after a long address it was discovered that his defence rested upon a case in 2nd Caines' Cases in Error, applied by the constable in this wise:

"If you Saw the nag, he would appear unsound;

"If you Felt the nag, he would feel unsound;

"If you Heard the nag, his sentiments were diseased;

"If you Tasted him, he would prove unrelishable;

"If you Smelt him, his falsity would be odorous;

"And here," continued the constable, "were the five senses, all a man has to aid him when dealing in horse-flesh, diametrically opposite to, what? to the assumption that

'e warranted, what? a racer? no—a coacher? o—a gigite? no—a noisy filly? no. What hen? a clam-horse, your Honor—and what i that? a shadow of spavined matter; a shade f the heaves; a skeleton of the botts; an mperspiring weaver; a midnight crib-biter; combination of bone and grizzle; a figure f hide-bound fame. Think of that, if it leases the Court, now here;" concluded the onstable, looking at Paper and his partner ith eyes as keen as polished chisels.

The Justice at this juncture was ready to lecide both ways or either way, so convincing ad the respective counsel been in their xpandous arguments; and if the case had ested here, the Justice would have been bound to go home and toss a copper in the ir, in order to give any judgment whatever in the matter. But he was subjected to further mystification; for when more was uttered by the legal luminaries, greater was the doubt of the Justice, and his opinion was being completely inwrapped in the clouds. The enchanted Mr. Rod, who was of counsel with the learned Mr. Paper, now rose to clear away the shadows that hung before the eyes of the great man; and Mr. Rod, having cleared his throat of a fragment, and having returned the steel-edged glance of the opposing constable, with a loud voice read fourteen pages of Cowan's Justice, 1st. ed., drawing after them thirty-one quotations from Johnson's Reports, with notes in proportion; six cases from Caines' Cases in Error; quoted copiously from Viner's Abridgment, sometimes called "The Rocky Mountains;" and cited Hungry John, on Hide-bound Nags; Barton Beanblower on Blinkers, 2 vols., Lon. ed.; Mike Snorter on Warranty, 12 vols. Venim; and handed the Court a brief of thirty written pages to prove the beneficial tendency and moral features of the New York Jockey Club, and to show the exalted practices of the New York Horse Market.

The learned Justice was by this time swimming in a world of new inventions, for such we consider the "Law" in a Justice's Court. If he had been in a mysterious atmosphere before Mr. Rod rejoined, what was his situation now, when confusion of facts appeared legally confounded! he felt doubly puzzled the moment he touched upon "words of description," and "express covenants," which had bothered the unsteady noddles of very wise planets in the judicial firmament. So singularly confused did the ward luminary feel, that in endeavoring to spread out the law and the fact, he fell into a long series of legal oddities and mental soliloquies, arising from several main questions, viz:

Que.—Can the color of a nag's tail darken the question of warranty, when the sun may ...r that tail in an hour? Vide Hogarth's ...l-end and Rod's brief.

Second.—If a horse be cross-eyed—que. does he come within the legal glance of warranty? See Beanblower, with American notes, p. 400; Newton and Delval on homogeneous and heterogeneous light; Byron's Vision of Judgment.

Third.—If you head a horse towards Skintown, and give him one lash with a whip—que. is he hide-bound? See Snorter on Rete Mucosum and Cutis.

Fourth.—If a horse be warranted sound, wind and limb, and proves skin-bound—que. what is the warranty worth?

Fifth.—If a horse is sold free from fault, and like other animals, dies from drinking spirits—que. is that a breach? and, que—or only animal indulgence? See Hungry John on Drinking Donkies.

Sixth.—If a colt is sold, and nothing is said of his standing, and he lies down and refuses his oats—que. is that a starving condition, or conditional breach? and, que.—or only wrongheadedness? See Judge Grinder on Appetite; Combe on Dietetics; Baron Tooleywhagg O'Shaughnashane on Oatmeal.

Seventh.—If a horse is sold for "a good clam-horse," and he is taken sick, and against the advice of Dr. Horn, has his case "patched up"—que. is that a breach? are "good clam-horse" words of description, or debris of solid warranty? Vide Dr. Buchan on certain cases; Medical Reports at large; Autobiography of a member of the Jockey Club; Dr. Evans' Hints.

These perplexing items troubled the transcolating mind of the super-eminent Justice, before whose wandering vision rose up in martial array fourteen hundred and fifty thousand quintals of dry cod-fish, which he had sold, and warranted good, and sweet, and sound; he having been a vender of dry cod-fish that lost their coats while wrapped in a great-coat of Turk's Island. It never occurred to him that some curious looker and listener in the temple of litigation, might also look into his well-digested opinion, now that he aspired to settle dry points of law, and had ceased to finger pints of dry salt.

This decision of his might also be carried up before some superior blockheads for revision, and therefore he determined to examine into the matter very closely, and with all that analytical discernment and power so distinguishable in one who is suddenly introduced upon a bench, which proves to him a seat of roses undoubtedly, but not deficient in a multiplicity of technical thorns. The Justice adjourned his court for a week, to study the difference between dry cod-fish and horses when drawn into the metaphysical whirlpool of warranty; and look into Cowan's blunderbuss of legal bore, and Caine's pistols, and Johnson's muskets, and other the legal artillery of Judges and gentlemen whom

even the law could not make judges; and also into Rod's voluminous brief on the surpassing gentility and highly honorable New York horse-market, with all its living pictures, and swoln countenances, and discolored eyes, and enlarged noses, there set forth in colored relief.

The whole company walked into the neighboring grocery, and all the grandees, including the justicial, took an interesting pull at the liquid ropes that hang so many quarrelsome topers; and as nobody offered to pay for the domestic extracts, the eloquent constable who had defended the suit with perspiring brow, and who frequently tested the virtue of fire-waters, paid the shot, which amounted to exactly three-fourths and a vulgar fraction of his retaining fee.

Mr. Paper and his learned associate, Counsellor Rod, returned to their office, where they found Captain John Thunderbolt entertaining Mr. Stir with a military tale about the tail of an animal which was shot at in the line of march seven times without unfolding itself; and afterwards was discovered to belong to a stuffed article dropped from a caravan.

The Captain paid the firm for their services in drawing his papers, which were perfectly done, they, the said firm, being good conveyancers when sober; who always completed their documents in style, with red lines, and blue angles, and wide margins, tied with scarlet ribbons as neat as a lady could have done who had studied the art of trimming foolscap. Having received his documents and certain instructions that would induce him to visit Albany, he made his adieu to the law firm of Stir, Paper and Rod, Esqrs., Notary, Attorney, Counsellor, Proctor and Commissioner, being all included under the wide-spread circumference of their professional umbrella. The Captain followed the dusty street with its long pavements, and having reached the vicinity of home he saw the forms of Lawyer Jim and St. Barts stretched upon a log, each with his burning segar, and gazing at the toiling struggles of the worldlings in their various walks and labors; while the smokers apparently enjoyed their burning inches of tobacco with the same calm content that pleases the richer idler who puffs his vapor from the windows of a large hotel, and whose life is as active as the gilded sloth.

Within the premises of Mrs. Seiser Captain John met that lady and the family, and told them that on the next morning he should take passage in the "Dutch Cow," a celebrated steam-racer on the traveling lines; and by no means within his knowledge could he return before Monday night, and that he had communicated to Sam the necessity for the latter to be in the market at the close of the Saturday night. The Captain then made preparations for his journey, he never having witnessed the trotting matches, the cantering figures, and running and galloping steeds, that make so many and such queer and high-sounding noises in their races one with another, untouched by whip or spur.

The lazy St. Barts, in company with his distinguished friend Jim, whose intellect was nearly on a par with either of the great firm whose practice was profitable in the Marine and Justices' Courts, continued to regale themselves at length on the logs, left for years on the docks to accommodate men of their elegant habits. Their positions were flat ones, each being on his back, and with a fragment of a hat covering his organs of vision, as black as hats are in general after a service of several years; but though darkness was upon the face of their peepers, the light colors that passed in review before their fancies, belonged to a family known and believed by all the children of earth to form circles in the dreams of men upon the land, and the sea, and the hills, and the valleys, and whose worshippers are millions. There were the colors of the eagle and his half and quarter brothers, and the glorious sheen of the dollar and his relatives of half his consequence and quarter of his weight, and the foreign pistareen and native dime, and even the dirty end of small change whose baptismal gift the vulgar have enlarged to "red cent:" all the beautiful colors of the metallic family passed and repassed, and the Lawyer, in the excess of his dreamy joy, muttered the words, "yellow as the goold of Guinea."

"I'll tell you wot," said St. Barts, "you're goin' it on the yellow jaundice, Jim; your liver's 'fected."

At that instant, the hands of Mr. Crib descended, the one on the hat of Jim and the other on the hat of his friend; the pressure was quite heavy, and so as effectually to shut out daylight from the vision of each worthy; and all the beauties of their native and foreign coins vanished, and left but minute sparks in the eyes of both: each thought that his boon companion was "crowning" him, and they shouted:

"Cum, Jimmy, you're too heavy, now."

"Take off your hand, you rummer," said Jim.

"I'll choke you with a false dollar," holloo'd St. Barts.

"Vell, fun's fun, but I'm —" fiercely muttered Jim.

"Oh, you'll do vot?" said St. Barts, struggling.

"I'll let you know," said the other, endeavoring to rise.

Sam still held them both down, laughing in his quiet manner, but suddenly releasing the twain, he sunk silently between the large logs unseen; the two combatants, red as globes of

cognac in the face, took attitudes of offence and defence, and made preliminary motions for a savage pugilistic encounter.

It was a question which was the stronger of the two lazaroni, and whether either had power sufficient to do the other harm; but fearing some danger—though very small—from the interference of the officers; and after the first blood had been drawn, Sam rose from his ambush, and taking each by the demi-collar, shook them like bundles of rags.

"Cum, let go, Sammy, if you don't want a lickin'," said St. Barts.

"None of yer ruffin' a gentlemin," said Jim, wiping his scarlet nose with a newspaper, and shedding a couple of tears, neither of anger nor joy.

Sam laughed with astonishment, and merely observed that he had crowned them both; and as it was a crown each, and worth five shillings, they were welcome to the familiar gift. The two denizens sat for twenty minutes gazing out upon the bubbling of the racing tides of the East river, and then, as if touched by the bow of an orchestral leader, they struck simultaneously into Jim's favorite air—

"The Lion bore down, while the Richard did rake,
Which caused the hearts of bold Britons to quake"—

which being whistled all through with a fife-like trueness, created the usual amount of friendly sympathy in the two harmonized amateurs, who forthwith changed the tune to—

"I wish I was a brewer's horse for quarter of a year,
I'd put my head right in the cask and use up all the beer"

After this was whistled clean through with variations, including the supplemental air entitled "Brown-stout is a gent. I could swallow whole," they walked up to the point, near Quagspunger's, with the observation by St. Barts, "that Sam hadn't a drop of music in his whole soul, and that was the reason he didn't drink."

The latter went down to the office of Counsellor Rod, and found that man of legal abstruseness in a good humor, and in a slight degree touched by a wand of inebriating enchantment; but not so as to preclude consultation upon business matters.

Mr. Crisp gave a history of his assault on the big sailor from the first to the final end of the whole business, and stated what he could prove, and by whom; and Mr. Rod crowded all the information in his daily remembrancer, being a book which he termed the "Ghost of Memory," and then promised to inform Mr. Crisp of the trial day; and offered a wager that Samson Spike, the big sailor, big as he was, wouldn't keep his legs in the legal storm of a criminal court.

It was evident that Counsellor Rod was getting more happy, and felt a heavier touch of the wand above alluded to; for he smiled more graciously, and put his professional hand upon the shoulder of Mr. Crisp, and said in the most familiar manner:

"Beat him, yes, sir—don't be alarmed, Mr. Crisp; rely upon our professional abilities and our influence—you understand"—

"No, I don't," said Sam, moving off from Mr. Rod, to escape the nameless odor from his lungs.

"So I thought, Mr. Crisp," said Rod; "but, sir, let me tell you, that influence with political men now-a-days is nine points of the criminal law. Why, sir, our names and fames, that is, our professional standing, are known and appreciated in every Justice's Court, and even by the one-eyed dignitary of the "Legal Sieve," as we call the sittings in a certain basement chamber. Why, Mr. Crisp, as sure as you are sitting there, we shall gain the cause we had up town to-day, where we sued on a warranty of a clam-horse, which, if it stand up 'till the Justice lays down the law points, that is, if the poor horse live, it will be a miracle. If we gain that, sir, we'll have a complimentary note from the New York Jockey Club; you belong to that Club, Mr. Crisp?"

"Undoubtedly," said Sam, proud of the fact of being associated with men of great animal knowledge.

"But, Mr. Crisp," said the Counsellor, growing more communicative, "in the marine line, which is a portion of our practice, the greatest knowledge is required."

"I should s'pose you'd said cunning," observed Sam.

"You have me," answered Rod; "it is cunning; but, sir, with courts and juries, it goes for knowledge; the public endorse the baptism, and we gain by the reputation of being very learned, while in fact we are only shrewd—humbug, Mr. Crisp, I own it; and the public you know swallow it."

"So the Captin told me," muttered Sam.

"Why, Mr. Crisp," continued Mr. Rod, "touching our marine practice, I'll relate to you a fact that will appear upon our papers—it was capitally done by what's termed the Habeas Corpus."

"That's a new court, an't it?" said Sam.

"You're right, and they give judgment there without taking the yeas and nays," said Mr. Rod, nearly choking with laughter.—"Excuse me," continued Rod; "the circumstance I meant was the case of Captain Hinge, master of the brig Bett; his cargo was in, hatches down, tarpaulin over, and it wanted two hours of the starting time, when in he came in a sweat that seemed to threaten his whole arteries with a drought: Counsellor Rod, cried the captain:"

"Help yourself, Cap.," said I, producing the brandy bottle; "we always, Mr. Crisp, keep rum for the sailors. It's a receipt we always give a mariner for a retainer; none

drink here, Mr. Crisp, but sailors, which is the only reason I asked the captain to take a bumper. I knew that if he were not our client before drinking, he would be in fifteen minutes after. No, said the captain, I'm not dry, and he pointed to the officer at the door with a capias. I read the writ, shook my head, and the captain asked what could be done? I can raise a fair wind for you, said I, by to-morrow at eleven a. m.: in the mean time you go and content yourself under lock and key. The captain went off with the officer; I repaired on board his brig, made two of his men freeholders on paper, dressed them in long coats, and with the genteel gear of solid citizens, each exhibiting a repeater and all its golden rigging; then sued out a habeas corpus returnable at 10 a. m.

"I appeared on the return of the writ, and gave bail that appeared as unquestionable as the color of the heavens; the Judge received his fees in silver, and that was the only thing that didn't make him smile, he was so used to it. And, sir," continued Mr. Rod, "the captain sailed away with a pennant streaming in the wind; the bond the two men signed was prosecuted, when the default of the captain was made at the trial; and when our firm was asked about the property of the sureties, we told the inquirer that they had sold it an hour before leaving the country, which they actually did the day after signing the bond. There, sir," continued Rod, "that was done legally, and I defy the devil to impeach the transaction under the present law. Now, sir, how many men ought to thank heaven because the writ of habeas corpus wrung from the hand of power, was incorporated into our bill of rights?"

Mr. Rod at this time spoke with difficulty, his saliva resembling cotton threads, more than it did the ordinary fluid secreted from the glands. He rose and asked Mr. Crisp to take punch, but Mr. Crisp declined, half whispering that it was a beastly practice to drink liquor: at the word beastly, the Counsellor felt a suffusion even on his high forehead, and was silent; as if an unintentional rebuke always has a fatal effect upon an educated mind. Sam parted with Mr. Rod in a friendly manner, for he was a client of the latter, who soon recovered his wonted buoyancy of spirit in the groggy dominion of the well-known Stonebiter.

CHAPTER XIX.

The clam-chorister, and Catharine street and Market, and the hucksteress, all on a Saturday night.

It was Saturday night, the most busy night of the whole week, and the entire month in the republican calendar, provided the month be not July. It is a busy night for hundreds and thousands who pass down or up to the cheap stores and markets, to stand and cater for the infinite variety that is spread out before their eyes, at the grocer's, and baker's, and hatter's, and shoe-stores, and meat-shops, and market-stalls, and huckster stands, and clam, and oyster, and fish carts. How many people escape for once in a whole week from their little upper front, and rear, and garret rooms, and with a basket on the arm, and two, three or four children in tow alongside, walk patiently until they can price twelve times the same article, and then get to the conclusion that the twelfth trial must be the final one, because they are tired, and the children are becoming troublesome! Yes, the Saturday night is the busiest and most stirring of all the year, except the independent and rainless night of the fourth day of July, when these same people escape out, some with four, and some with eight, and some with ten little patriots, besides three sisters-in-law, and a country nephew, and a maiden aunt, and take their free walk into the beautiful gardens of Signor Contoit, where the waiters are all as black as jet, and the cream is all as white as saturated snow—except a delicate little cap of crimson that sits on the top of the glass.

On this Saturday night, at the corner of Pell street and that broad high road known for many years by the name of "Bowerische Laening," and subsequently by "The Bowery," the voice of Lob Teershedder, who was following the tail of Sam's cart like a pall-bearer with a lantern, might be heard in that well-known song, drawn out in tones as long as a ship's cable: "Here's your Rockaway sand-clams, here they go——o——o——o!" The music to suit these words was a compound of sundry notes arranged—not for the Piano, but—for the mouth of Mr. Teershedder, which being all on one side, it was supposed required notes all from one side of a sheet of music. The air was an infringement upon four copy-rights, secured according to law, and was a mixture of "Bonny Dog," "All in the stilly nights," "The funny boat," and "The maid's eye;" and this composition was studied by Lob for some time before he adopted it; and he consulted the musical taste of Lawyer Jim, who endeavored, by varying the tune, to fit it to the side of Lob's face, where his mouth was. Then it was rehearsed in Mr. Bungspunger's garret by Lob, and Jim, and St. Barts—the latter merely aiding as candle holder—until Sandy finding it a dry business, and that it brought no custom to the bar, broke up the rehearsal parties, by sending them down to the dock, to waste their trial notes on the waves of the East river.

The whole arrangement, however, owed its music to the undoubted taste of Jim, who

was well known to be wholly alone in the fine execution of his admirable ballad, entitled

"The Lion bore down while the Richard did rake;"

with as many variations as any Richard would execute with a rake.

Slowly the cart of Sam Crisp made its easy journey, being drawn by a horse of the twenty-six shilling value; and ever and anon the domestic harmony of Lob, rising gradually from a pair of lungs huge as a mail bag, spread through the street, and saluted the people in upper rooms and basement apartments.

There was a softness in Lob's tones that was noticed by several amateurs, who would often stop on the pavement to hear the final note that hung on his lips, like one of a broken bank in the pocket of any other man; and when he finished his trembling solo with a slight advance in falsetto, the amateurs would smile, walk away quick, and whisper, "astonishing!" The song of Lob was not given, however, in those loud and harmonious tones that sometimes arrest the passers by, when a patent sweep is flinging his native sounds and song on the ears of the broad day; when the power of the negro's voice is uttered with a tremendous but clear well-toned. tune, that soars far above Wood's or Forest's in their respective schools of musical or eloquent declamation, and the negro seems to pour the gathered power of his lungs in prolonged rolls of sound, as if he were challenging the giants of the cloud to give him a flue to scrape, which he could do better than any pretender that ever flew up to scrape before him.

The cries of Mr. Teershedder always had an effect upon the female portion of a family, ever ready to listen to music, and buy delicate fish; and he had followed the cart but a small distance before Miss Nit presented herself at the side of the cart, in dishabille—almost incog.

"Hoa! hoa! Pony! don't run off, ye scoundill;" cried Lob, in as much earnest as if the horse could run; "now, mam, vot kin we do for you, mam?"

"You're the one, I b'lieve," said Miss Nit, "that gave only forty-five for the last half hundred I bought."

"Umposserbil, mam, we never does that," said Lob, shaking his head triumphantly.

"Well, I don't know," said Miss Nit, "you look like 'im."

"Vy, mam," said Sam, "you'd know that chap forever if you once fixt yer eyes on 'im; he's of twelve year standin'."

"Well, I don't know," said Miss Nit, "he hollers like 'im."

"Vy he's got the best woice of any crier in town," said Sam.

"Well, I don't know," said Miss Nit, "he mayn't be the one; but you must give fifty to the half hundred."

"Never guv less," said Sam, "while we've been in the trade. Lobby, sing out," continued Sam, "while I count."

Here Lob, striking the first part of his tune, turned the joined notes, looking at the cart and dropping five or six tears, and in the pride of his science and important place, feeling like the leading chorister to the clam-band, and despising the tin trumpet of a common porgy vender.

The clams being counted and put in the basket of Miss Nit, that lady paid the amount, threw the shawl over her head, and ran all the way to the house, to avoid being seen by a beau, who would not know what to think of Miss Nit, if seen in that shocking dress!

The patient horse then took another draw, and halted about fifty feet, at the top of Catharine street, at the junction of the dirty place called Division street: dirty it was, when we reflect how many pretty milliner ladies occupied the neatly furnished stores, and presented therein their beautiful bonnets for sale.

At the cart of Sam Crisp appeared another customer; it was Mr. Sharper, and just behind him was his amiable wife, and both the most economical people that ever ate brown bread without butter, telling their country relations that butter in the city was poisonous to people from the country, and thereby saving the expense thereof. They almost lived upon clams, long and short, large and small, at times, in order to vary the dinner; which was further varied by a bunch of cheap eels, a lonesome porgy or black-fish, bought when market-day was closing, and which was sold cheap. Muscles was another variety, which Mr. Sharper gave to his three apprentice boys in his business of cabinet maker, and when so given it was told by Mrs. Sharper that they were got at considerable expense only to afford a variety for the 'prentices, and that it was the liberality of Mr. Sharper that produced the fish.

When the dinner of muscles was eaten, the poor apprentices would re-enter the shop, and roll in the shavings with most dreadful laughter at the story of the lady, and make wry faces as if they were endeavoring to spit out a shell swallowed by mistake.

"Well, well, cheap to-night, I suppose?" said Sharper.

"Only five shillings a hundred, zur," said Lob.

"Five shillings!" said Sharper; "young man you better knock a man down; I never give over four."

"Umposserbil," said Lob, shedding six careless tears.

"Them's got no meat in 'em," said Sam.

"Young man, I think I know," returned Sharper. "My dear, is there a family in this neighborhood buys clams as often as we do? why, young man, our apprentices won't eat

any thing else but [illegible]; in fact, flesh is not good for them; the doctor told us to feed 'em no meat whatever; it would ruin the apprentices before their indentures expired. I think four shillings a hundred, ha, Mrs. Sharper?"

"Yes, my dear, four is enough, I don't think."

"Can't sell 'em so low, sir," said Sam.

"Well, four and six; come, young man, be accommodating," said Mr. Sharper. If our apprentices would eat any thing else, why we wouldn't stand; but we must do the best for 'prentices."

"Can't take less, sir; they're better than any in market," said Sam. "Come, Lob, cry out."

"Stop," said a genteel little lady, stepping up to the cart," give me a hundred; yes, these are the kind; here, Ketty, hold the basket, and we can get our portion without going to market."

"Do you think, mam," said Sharper to the little lady," that they're worth five shillings?"

"Oh, certainly!" said the lady, "they're worth six."

"Oh, bless me!" said Sharper. "Well, ha, my dear, we'll take a hundred, as this lady knows they're cheap."

Mr. Sharper bought because he knew the fish were cheap; if he could have saved six cents by going down to the market, he would have dragged Mrs. Sharper clear to the dock. His humanity for the apprentices was extreme, and to show it, he fed them on a diet as near as possible to the vegetable prescriptions of the great Mr. Graham. His apprentices were from the House of Refuge, which not only afforded refuge for boys, but some large people, who love to take refuge under a fat salary. Mr. Sharper had to see to the morals of the apprentices, and he reasoned that a coarse diet would clear and preserve the morals of his three boys; by feeding them only clams, he would therefore kill two birds with one stone, and in fact more, he'd kill the whole three—for diet like his in a few years would sweep off a dozen apprentices who labored hard.

"Go on," said Lob to the philosophic nag in the cart, and on he went at a pace that may be distinguished in a genteel man afflicted with the inflammatory rheumatism; and then the long sounds of Lob's solo came out of his crooked mouth while he was limping, and spread around the neighborhood and the near streets, and the last notes trembled like the imitation of an Italian savan.

"Sam, you got any tobakker?" cried Lob.

"No," returned Sam.

"Let's buy a penny 'orth to comfort usselves; clams! here's yer fine Rockaway sand kil—le—a—am—ams," cried Lob, looking in the cart to see whether a clam dared to open its lips to breathe the air of freedom; which was a well-known sign that death had changed the odor of its heart.

Now the cart entered in the narrow dirty avenue called Catherine street, which leads directly to the great eastern market of the same name: its walks are narrow, and not half so wide as the public accommodation requires, and on a Saturday evening it is difficult to thread the road, so choked is the side-walk with baskets and living people. There stands the huge basket of chestnuts, and its tin measures within it, and there also stands the guardian of the basket with one eye, roaring in a hoarse voice, "only a shilling a quart; beauties, mam, only two cints aich, luk at them oringis," cries an Irishman with eyes looking all abroad for a customer. "The Flying Fish, only one cent," cries a boy whose shirt has luckily found a hole, out of which it comes to partake of the largest liberty. There is a pair, two pretty girls, one with a basket, going down like trim-built vessels, and laughing in great earnest at nothing, save all that they see. There is a woman; only gaze upon her; she has four children, and they are going with her to spend a single shilling; every other step she looks round to be satisfied that they are safe; now she jerks little Amanda right before her, and nearly stumbles over the child, and in a suddenly felt perspiration, exclaims, "odd rot the child"—but nothing will rot the child but death, and she wouldn't give the little one to death, no, not she; it is her own image, has her own blue eye, and clear beautiful skin, and small lips, and curling chestnut hair, and an innocent smile that leads our thoughts far into the home of angels; no, she would not give it to death for the great globe, and all its burnished gold, and the starry lustre of its boldest silver.

There is a woman who has tenanted all out doors, and keeps a crockery shop on the walk, and has spread out her earthern ware, as if dirt should return to dirt: oh, good lady! if these clam-horses and oyster-horses could—we are very cautious—if they could run away, if they could run at all, and they run over your stock, what havoc they would make in two minutes by the grocer's watch; into how many shapes would the poor woman's crockery-ware be knocked! what would be the shape of that poor tea-pot, if the spout were shivered, and the cover in splinters? It is plain that it never could be spouted in Abraham's pawn bosom; and that basin, with its pale white swelling cheeks, how it would roll in fragments, and decline to hold together, or water to gather; and the money-jugs all empty, and tea-cups misnomered, for they never spread four shilling Souchong nor black leaves. It is dangerous to keep a shop on the walk, for ladies will walk over and not in

it; and then the officers will not insure a stock with no canopy but the clouds, and no resting-place but the cold redness of the dirty bricks.

"Only four cents a half peck!" exclaims a voice, and forthwith another voice in opposition and a little lower down, cries out louder, "three and a half cents a half peck; here they go." The voices of these men were like the porters that cry murder in the subterranean caverns of the theatre. A little Frenchman stops and buys a small measure of peaches, and he puts them in a white handkerchief, and they stain it all over, and it costs him six cents to have it washed and made stainless: that makes no difference, however, he got cheap peaches and went off contented. There was a dry-good man with a large pile of domestic muslins sixteen feet high, and then there rose a cross pile of red flannels higher still, with woolen enough to clothe the inhabitants of a seventy-four gun ship; and in the window the goods appeared coming down like great masses of water; and which the little wag of a clerk informed an Irish lady was intended to represent the cataract of the calicoes. There was the dry-good merchant's neighbor, a red-faced man, short necked, and eager to sell anything of the numerous greasy things, which appeared to be ill neighbors to the clean and silky bundles and pieces of a muslin merchant.

The throng poured down the street thicker than ever, yet nobody appeared to be hungry. "Only four cents a small measure, sold 'em for eight all day," cries a gentleman, bored to death by a neighbor who undersells him, out of a basket of rotten peaches, and who for that reason sells out to the newspaper boys, whose taste is not critical, or they wouldn't buy and sell affected fruit. There goes a French lady and her daughter, and the former looks younger than her daughter, at least by candle light. There is an Irish lady troubled with a child at the breast, a large basket of potatoes and cod-fish on her arm, and two children clinging to her garment, eating rotten peaches. She has the marketing to do out doors, while her husband is doing his duty at the domino table in the whisky market.

There comes a whole clique of confidential friends, six lady boarders from a boarding-house, accompanying the lady of the house herself, to see that she don't buy poor meat, cheap potatoes, wilted turnips, and India-rubber parsnips; they go all through the market, and laugh and giggle, and cheapen sundry things; and one who can live upon tomatoes, makes a sudden shoot upon a quart of that delicious fruit, and deems herself free from dyspeptic evils from that very moment.

"Ladies, only two cints aich," cried an orange-vender; and then all the ladies laughed at the man with a beard a week old, and as wiry at a rat-trap.

Then appeared two important gentlemen with blue coats and naval buttons, and glazed caps with gold bands, trying to thrust their victorious persons through the crowded passages.

"Major Ink, it's a nuisance, sir," said Captain Noc.

"Decidedly, Captain Noc," responded the Major.

"The Mayor ought to be indicted," said Noc.

"And the Corporation too, sir," said Ink.

And the heads of the tall officers turned around importantly, over the heads of the passengers, and their eyes appeared to be in search of some person hid in the obscurity of the dim distance.

"Let us cross over, Ink, there's danger of disease," said Noc.

"Agreed, Major; what a run of slush," said Ink.

"Slush, damn me, worse, sir," said Noc, indignantly.

"There's a stench of rot," said Ink, turning up his nose.

And away went the lofty individuals, with a correct military step of twenty-eight inches, as if they had been cadets at eight years of age, and continued the military step to please their mamas, who were wishing that they would be an honor to the army: so they were, and were an honor to nothing else. Down they went towards the ferry, with big canes, and big heads apparently upon swivels, and lofty and important they trod, as if they could demolish the pigs, the dogs, the children and their parents, and awning poles, and signs, and baskets, and barrels, and even lamp-posts, which were of little use, and watchmen who were of less; but they swept on without endangering anything, like the step of pride that passes, but is too impotent to injure.

There was another out-door establishment, a merchant of the pave, and his ware was not crockery, but all tin. What a funny corporation the city must have to hire out the pavement to a tin-man for five hours, as if the article were only fit to be exhibited in places where no charge of rent was made, and nothing paid except to the ward inspector, who took his fees in the shape of a tin basin, with which on a Sunday morning he could wash his conscience clean.

There was a small woman with the smallest articles around the whole mart; all her stock in trade could not amount to three shillings; and if she disposed of one half, how much would she profit herself? the problem might be susceptible of mathematical demonstration; there was no labor required; but surely human patience was worth more than she could realize.

"You did, Jemmy," said an Irishman to his friend.

"I didn't, Mickey," said Jemmy.

"I till ye ye did," said Mickey.

"In troth I didn't," said Jemmy.

"Oh! do ye deny 't?" said Mickey.

"What a false tongue ye 'ave," said Jemmy.

"Don't say I lie," said Mickey, doubling his fist; and on the spirited parties went, quarreling along the road.

"And what was it all about?" said one lady to another.

"Bless your soul, I don't know! perhaps nothing, a mere trifle; how easy it is to quarrel," continued the second lady. "How singular people are, always wanting to disagree. How often a person ought to make a bow, instead of bestowing an epithet. Why, bless you, mam, there's my neighbor, Mrs. Jennings, if a pint of suds happens to go over on her pavement, she rails for an hour, threatens to send in Mr. Jennings to keep my house to rights: did you ever! why, she scolds by the hour," continued the second lady. "She has no patience, and no more discretion than a animal. If her servant-maid cuts too deep in peeling potatoes, bless me, she gives her an hour's lecturing in domestic economy, and on the art of skinning a blue-nose."

"She must be a disagreeable woman," said the first lady.

"Bless you," said the second lady, "if you ever hire a girl that quits her service without leave, then beware—I say nothing, mam; but only beware."

The ladies were here separated, for the stream of life came down thick, and went up as thick; all mixed and mingled, and exhibiting beauties equal to any other stream, with its bright eyes, and clear brows, and curling hair, and cheeks like the young rose, and teeth like the round snow-ball, and hats of every color, and shawls of every shade, and waists of calico blending the dyes from the far foreign berries and woods, and little feet and smaller shoes; with a sprinkling of check shirts and red flannel over-shirts, and chip hats and tarpaulins upon men with whiskers and dark brown brows, matching the darkness of bronze: all hurrying down for the flesh, and fish, and fowl, or passing up with the peaches, and parsnips, and potatoes, and the flowers that united their colors in the charming bundle of leaves and stems, that pass by the name of "bouquet," in the hands of a simple beau.

The stream of life pouring down, when arrived at the corner of Cherry street, divided and passed off, one rill thereof in the meat market among the jolly red-faced butchers, and another rill down the East side of the market, where the patient hucksteress sat waiting for customers to price, or purchase and pay. Nearly all the characters who passed down entered the meat-market, where the butcher or his chief clerk was ready to exhibit his flesh at a given rate per pound; and even sell his joints to the people, and part for money with his flank-piece, or his whole side, or his shoulder-blade, or his saddle, or even his rump, to any who would buy. There was a large lady who kept genteel boarders, and her six ladies with her, all looking on while she bargained for that fine article called in the knightly land of the old Norman, Sir Loin; being the only Knight who suited the taste of all the people of the old ocean island. There too was the genteel young woman, blushing because the butcher was a handsome man, and wore large whiskers and a mop of hair greased with his own tallow: then the lady and her three children plagued the butcher about all kinds of meat, from salted in the tray to the skewered on the hooks; and after cheapening every article, passed out to buy three silent porgys, over whose remains four tubs of water had been thrown to keep them from fainting.

Then a little French lady approached a butcher who by dint of hard study had obtained forty words of the French language, and made use of them all to a French customer, who always patronized the butcher who could parlez Francois; so true it is that a Gallic lady is more at home with one who can jabber bad French, and will always buy where most at home. Then further on was a man who was in the Custom-house, and who spoke so loud that you could hear him all over the market, and when he laughed you could hear the echoes in the circular white ceiling: he was telling his butcher that he must have corned beef four times a week for dinner, or it would not do; he knew the beef was more profitable to the butcher, because he sold the coarse salt at the same price per pound as the meat; but that was nothing, he didn't mention the fact to make an insinuation—not at all: but he must have corn beef four times a week; there was a delicious flavor in the potatoes that bounced about with fat noses and brows in the same pot that boiled corn beef, that to him was a perfect gusto—venison was venison, certainly, but he'd be damned if corned beef wasn't corned beef.

Then there were three Irish ladies who had been asked to purchase at nine cents a pound, and who had bidden five by way of a feeler; for if the butcher had consented to take five they would have dropped down to three instanter: but the owner of the meat, knowing the habits of such people, had shaken his head and refused to take a copper less than his price; and they clung to the forlorn hope of getting it at their own bid, and had very cautiously advanced to seven cents; but that would not answer, and so they retired to cheapen somewhere else.

Then the people crossed a street, and were in another branch of the meat-market, where every variety was exhibited in all the forms the cleaver, and the axe, and the saw could fashion according to the known rules of the trade; in this lower section too were poultry, and nuts, and some fish, and here many were trifling their time away; and some laboring blacks were putting their funds together for the purchase of some uncommon article, that appeared to catch their combined vision and desires to obtain it. Out of this market another thirty feet showed the wandering seekers for good things, all the kinds of fish that ever made a bed in creek or stream, or inlet or bay, or estuary or lake; no matter what name the mother of ichthyology gave to the finny children.

There were long eels, thirty-six inches in a straight line, with a skin as smoothe as the velvet, and black-fish with his blunt nose, the streaked bass of genteel form and feature, and the flounder that laid all flat, and as clean as water could drench him. Here were the large negroes that work around the docks and in factories, they having a keen taste for the sober eel, fresh or stale, especially if smothered in saltish fat. Dutch people were seen also to cling to a bunch of fish tied to a rope-yarn, and manifesting some indifference whether the creatures were "dead a week" or a day, as they phrased it. Here also were pyramids of clams, and piles of long clams, the latter known by the projection of a fore finger from their two shells, and oysters placed in patches of about two feet square, with their mouths sealed, and all visible. Over these masses of bivalvular animals, during the day, water enough had been poured to put out a big fire, or put a small boat in motion, lest the lips of the shell fish should open, in which case, as they never close them again, it might give rise to the slander that they had bad breaths: and for the sake of peace and quietness, whenever a clam opened his mouth, he was thrust into the dock as a penalty for his presumption.

On the East side of the first meat-market, there sat in her old chair the quiet form of Mrs. Seiser, the hucksteress; it was a busy night sometimes for her, as she had a number of customers, and some of what are termed, in that section of the city, very respectable people: and this term having been rendered, people who have more money than their neighbors, is easily understood; although we heard of a parvenue once in that vicinity, who would not be called respectable even after he got rich, insisting upon it that it was anti-republican, and so was unconstitutional. Among the customers of Mrs. Seiser were a Mr. Cut and his wife, Mr. Cut being a frizeur, a wig maker, a hair cutter, and a shaver; leaving all the shaving, however, to his jouaneyman, as he despised to take common sailors by the nose, for no other reason than that they always smelt of tar—Mr. Cuts' grand-father having been tarred and feathered for an offence—not political.

By the time Mr. Sam Crisp got to the corner near which Mrs. Seiser was, and in company with Lob Teershedder, Mr. Cut and Mrs. Cut were dealing with the old lady, and being both English people, they were very difficult to please; but all their objections and notions were unheeded by Mrs. Seiser, she being deaf to what she called "stuff."

"Why, Mrs. Seiser," said Mr. Cut, continuing his discourse, "we in England, mam, would never think of selling such potatoes as those; our potatoes, mam, being as large as large musk-melons, and so mealy, mam, that they fall to pieces like so much indian meal; and our cabbages, mam, are all heads and no leaves. Mrs. Cut's mother was a market-woman in Clare market."

"A genteel one, Edgar," said Mrs. Cut.

"Certainly, my dear, I know that she had two sub-hirers to my own knowledge," said Mr. Cut.

"Oh, Lor," said Mrs. Cut, "this market's nothing to the English."

"Why, Mrs. Seiser," said Mr. Cut, "our beef in England is as far superior to your beef, as yours is to Albany beef, which, like water, is tasteless. Why, mam, we grow potatoes and turnips, and other sauce, on ground that you turn out an old horse to die upon. Is there any wonder at our market being superior?"

"Edgar, my dear," said his wife, "you forget the small meat, how delicious it is."

"You mean mutton, my dear," said Mr. Cut; "that's true; and then, Mrs. Seiser, we have lambs not exactly ten years old as they have here; we kill them in the tenderness of the first fourteenth night's birth; ah! there is lamb, and not the leg of a veteran."

"Edgar, we have enough sauce," said Mrs. Cut.

"Full enough," said Mr. Cut; "and now, Mrs. Seiser, if it was possible for me to get a sirloin of beef anything like an English one, anything at all, I should like it above all things; but I don't believe there's a market in the world can produce one."

"Not at this time of night," said Mrs. Seiser, "the best are carried away in the morning."

"All carried away," said Tom Scrape, coming up, "all taken by these monopoliars, the hottillers and big wimmin vot keeps boarding houses."

"So I supposed, sir," said Mr. Cut; "it's to be lamented, Mr. Scrape, that in a country like this it's tolerated."

"Vy, Lord bless ye," said Tom, "it's all monopoliars; vy, Mr. Cut, what d'ye think,

they took up oysters and put 'em in beds where a porgy would cry his eyes out for the want of the sea flood. Damn me, sir, who ever heird of a million oysters in one bed; vy its privation and starvation to the creeturs—for who? vy, monopoliars."

"Well, 'spose it's so," said Sam Crisp, "vot's the use of barking at a dog? I never saw a chap like you for barking."

"You don't mean to say, bark at me as the dog," said Mr. Cut.

"No, in course not, Cut," said Sam; "vy that feller couldn't live twenty-four hours without barking at somebody."

"Well, ha? well, so I thought," said Mr. Cut, laughing to think he might have had to resent an insult; a thing more unpleasant than curling or twisting hair.

"And do you think, Mr. Crisp, that I could git a sirloin at all worth havin?" asked the same gentleman.

"Well, I don't much calkillate you kin," said Sam, for Tom's right; they're carried off by the hottillers."

"Well, its a great pity in such a country as this, where every thing is—though, to be sure, inferior to every thing English."

"Then, what the devil does you cum here fur," said Sam, somewhat nettled.

"For the simple reason," said Mr. Cut, "here I git bread and butter, and there I could scarcely git bread."

"Well, that's putty plump," said Sam, somewhat surprised; "but vot d'ye make fun of things fur?"

"Mr. Crisp," said Mr. Cut, in a respectful manner, caught from a customer of his shop, "I'm in a free country, and I can speak my mind freely on every subject, standing only in fear of being lathered by the law: and as for being here, why, number one is first with me, and let the country take care of itself; it's old enough. heaven knows, and this is right, for Counsellor Rod, whom I shave, told me so, and he ought to know."

Mr. Crisp was done arguing, or rather asking questions, which is a lighter duty; he was strong—had double strength—but when it wanted mind, judgment, or reason, the thing was a blank—and he was a child.

Sam walked into the victualling shop to see how Teershedder was making away with his supper, which combined dinner and breakfast, for he had only ate four clams and a biscuit during the day, and discovered that worthy follower of the cart's tail with a pyramid of pork and beans before him, and too deeply intent on sweeping it in its proper berth, to be disturbed: pork and beans were manna in the melting eyes of Mr. Teershedder.

"How 's the business, landlord?" said Sam to the keeper of the cellar, a big ci-devant clam man.

"Dull ernuf, I tell yer; people don't git hungry any more as they used to do," said the landlord.

"If they starve 'emselves, they won't starve you," said Sam, casting his eyes over the long table.

"Oh, Molly," continued Sam to the landlord's daughter, who entered with a pie, with a crust of the color of pale jaundice; "all right, I see," pointing to her finger-ring.

"Sam, git out, you saucy-box," said Molly.

"Now don't git a blushin' and turn red," said Sam.

"I'll box your ears, you good-fur-nothin'," said Molly.

"Vot, for hintin' that you'm a genteel figger?" said Sam.

"Go on, Sammy; I'll send a pie at your noddle," said Molly.

"Well, I say nuthin'; I've no objection to the match, that is, if the old man hasn't," said Sam. "Now, Lob, arn't you full? vot a steverdore you are!"

"Vy, you can't go till Mrs. Seiser goes, kin yer?" said Mr. Teershedder, trying to choke himself with a pound of pork, which could'nt stick, as it was all fat, and soft, and buckwheat fed.

"No, but you must see to the hoss."

"Ay, ay, I'll be 'long before soon," said Lob, shedding tears of regret to think the pork didn't hang a few moments longer on the palate; and endeavoring to balance the account by licking the plate and sucking the spoon, and picking his teeth with the greased fork!

The market was getting deserted by customers, and the streets were passable, as the denseness of the crowd was no longer there: now and then a large portly man would hurry in, in a copious perspiration, and make his late purchases, and getting entangled in a discussion about some question of business, linger to cool his mortal body; and then clenching his few pounds of meat, sally round among the vegetable dealers, and carry off perhaps six bunches of hard small turnips, to choke his adult relatives and sicken his children. Then a portly lady, the head of a family of boarders, who ate like ostriches and paid like insolvents, made her appearance with two servants and two baskets, and two madrass handkerchiefs, declaring that late as it was, she must do her duty to her household; and she purchased a half dozen pounds of shrivelled flank cuts, determined to try the teeth of her boarders to see which would waste most in wear and tear, the grinders or the grinded, which being paid for, she wheeled out and round, and stood before Mrs. Seiser and took her chair, declaring she was overcome: "she knew that line of life would kill her; but, bless me, it must be endured," said she to Mrs. Seiser; "I know it's a slow consumption, but so it is." In the mean-

Mrs. Seiser filled in her baskets with ctions, and she ceased complaining. ; was the matter with the lady but a atigue; but she was one of a class not live without complaining; no who is present, the doleful tone is and many might deem such a woman the grave as her own home: when no resent to take the doleful burden, the ttent low half groans come out to tell ught that lingers in the mind; cer- he sounds are wasted, and expiring hearers, invite no sympathy; but still ve made an exit, and lessened the num- hich might be a matter of felicitation, not for the fruitfulness of their source. hen aunt of the old lady was taken slight attack of the rheumatism, the ing east, and the rain copious. The immediately repaired there, and put ice upon her heel to draw off, as she ed it, the cold in her chest; the next wind shifted and the weather cleared, old lady continued to groan for a s if her maiden aunt still lingered with e, and had encountered the case of a jacket.

old lady having completed her purcha- l having, as usual, told a dozen anec- her boarders with all the variations tal to the stream of female narrations, ing sighed heavily for the misfortune or man who passed by her door with d buried in his handkerchief, while the as merely shielding his features in a t of unrestrained laughter, she took ve of Mrs. Seiser, after whispering tially that one of her boarders gave e of being a deep beer-drinker, and if tinued such, how sad it would be for eresting little wife—poor, delicate which was a simple case, the boarder per party having drank three pints of eer, which quarreled with the bile on nach, and which had to be removed peace could be restored, and the nerves rain become painless and quieted.

miscellaneous market customers were period very few in number, and the osts of liberal purchasers and silver and fewer promised to be profitable sive in their vegetable bargains. There me whites and blacks, and pumpkin- in the lower market, talking in the ngo of their school, and sometimes ly wagering their legal coin on the re- eight of an eel without his skin, and porgy without fins; but beside this and the long laugh of the inflated , little was heard in that quarter. In h market a few butchers' representa- re scraping the stalls, or shuffling on asy floor; while the hooks were still ed with cuts of every shape, showing their [illegible] veins [illegible] to the hungry, and the owners of silver in possession.

The old hucksteress, whose eyes were as heavy as vegetables, drew in her outposts of plants and flowers, and having combined her raw forces more in the compactness of security, she prepared to take her usual walk home, giving to Mr. Crisp such articles as it was necessary to send in the clam-cart, along side of the body and spirit of the musical Mr. Teershedder. Then she extinguished her lights, and others quenched their flames, and as the moments passed on, the loitering butchers and fish-venders, and vicegerents, and loafers, and the pupils of the latter, evacuated the long markets and dirty side-walks, and the groggeries and victualling shops fitted their shutters in the spaces vacated in the morning, and the poison-venders turned out the tipplers, and the unwashed, and the unshaven, and unsobered; and the spot where thousands had trodden, and laughed, and cheapened, was left to the dulness of the creeping hours and the yawn of the sentinel watch.

Mr. Teershedder gave the reins to his unambitious steed, for it was an act of obvious supererogation to retain them. Years had past, one over another, but the most venerable clam-merchant could not recollect a single instance of such a horse running a-way, or any way, or even running at all, either from choice or compulsion; no, after a full examination of the records of the New York Jockey Club, *ab initio*, and after searching, by leave of the gentlemanly porter who proculates therefor with industry and ability, the whole series of the "Spirit of the Times," including, of course, its records of trots, and runs, and trainings, and trials, we were utterly unable to detect a single instance of a shell-fish vender's horse ever running, even when told to run—out to die! There was a rumor, a mere rumor, and it may be said to have been like the dim shadow of a sleeper's whisper, perhaps, after that sleeper died, and hence the rumor was a very *grave* one, that such a horse had run; and tradition, that muttering old lady, whose tales are so mysterious, and doubtful, and sometimes scandalous, had whispered in plain language that at the elegant horse-market, near 29th street, a clam-nag was seen on a canter; but upon a close canvass of the matter, it was found an undeniable truth, that the noble steed had fallen four times in going fifty feet, and was spunged in the mouth with gin and water, and with Chateau Margaux from the cellar of the Jockey Club, to sustain his after standing—not in reputation, but—on his legs.

No man knew this better than Teershedder, who was a member of the New York Club, all whose members were in the fish line, as

venders or consumers; so giving the reins to his horse, and himself to the easy bendings of an indolent manner, with his hand and four raw clams for the morrow's breakfast in his pocket, his head sunk on his bosom, and his senses in sleep.

Tom and Sam walked up with Mrs. Seiser, and after a half hour's journey they found Miss Angelica in deep thought as to the tale of the fortune-teller, its beginning, progression and end. The two small Seisers were down on the rag carpet, as silent as sleepers, and in positions not to be named without the table of trigonometry, where science takes his cold cuts.

"How tired I am," said Mrs. Seiser, taking a seat and jumping up forthwith, declaring it wouldn't do to sit.

"And why not rest yourself?" said Angelica

"It's too late, and we must to bed: so the Captain's gone?"

"Yes," said Angelica, nodding.

"Why, Angel, you're asleep."—

"Almost," said the niece—she should have said, quite.

The arrangements for sleep soon were made, and he came with his heavy hand, and pressed down the lids that had been open for seventeen hours of unremitted labor, and fatigue assisted him; and his pressure was down even to the chaos of dreamless forgetfulness.

END OF PART I.

THE

FAMILY OF THE SEISERS:

A Satirical Tale

OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART II.

Many a fiction has been ruled to be a fact under names that are genuine in our courts of law; and many a fact has been regarded as fiction in that which has been looked-upon as the invention of the novelist, in which every thing is true except the proper names. There may be more moral and actual truth in a written tale, than in ninety-nine cases and reports at nisi prius.—*Confession of a Lady.*

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY J. M. ELLIOTT, 83 LIBERTY-STREET.

1844.